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ABSTRACT

This document contains eight papers from the international issues section of an international conference on vocational education and training (VET) for lifelong learning in the information era. The following papers are included: "The Impact of Globalisation and the Changing Nature of Work on Vocational Education and Training" (Chris Robinson); "In Search of a Governance Framework of Vocational Education and Training for the 21st Century: An International Comparative Study" (Humphry Hung); "Cross Border Activities to Strengthen Technical and Vocational Education and Training Systems in the Information Era" (L. Efison Munjanganja, Di Booker, Sarah Hayman); "The Competency of Cross-Culture of Expatriates in the Multinational Corporation" (S.T. Tsai, Shu-Hsaio Tsen); "Provision of Professional Training to Meet Global Procurement Challenges in Hong Kong" (Josephine C.S. Kea); "From 20th Century Education and Training to 21st Century Skills Enhancement" (Archibald M. Fleming); "Regional Integration of TVET (Technical and Vocational Education and Training) Systems among Small Island States: Caribbean Initiatives" (Tom McArdle); and "Thirsty Horses and Public Waterholes" (Joyce Marie Turnbull). Most papers contain substantial bibliographies. (MN)

Paper Presentations

Session C

International Issues

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Vocational Education and Training for
Life Long Learning in the Information Era

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THE IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION AND THE CHANGING NATURE OF WORK ON VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Chris Robinson

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Index: Globalisation, changing nature of work, vocational education and training, lifelong learning.

Abstract: The world is changing fast these days. Globalisation of economies and rapid technological change critically affects all countries. The education and training systems in all countries have had difficulties in keeping up with the pace of change, yet it is vital that they do so. Some of the key technical skills we will need in 20 years time do not yet exist. This poses tremendous problems and challenges for the provision of education and training (VET).

Several new research studies released by the Australian National Centre for Vocational Education Research have examined the implications of the globalisation and the changing nature of work on vocational education and training. A key finding is that policies to further promote lifelong learning will be fundamental if nation's are to respond to the challenges from globalisation to develop the new skills needed to maximise economic potential.

INTRODUCTION

More has been written about globalisation in the past decade than most other topics in international literature of the subject of the development of nations. Hobart (1999) provides an extensive review of that literature with respect to the impact of globalisation on vocational education and training (VET). In doing so Hobart (1999, p 12) draws up a broader concept of globalisation from Laxar (1995) that encompasses global economic changes including a global shift from goods to services; global ideological changes that emphasises investment liberalisation, deregulation, trade liberalisation and increased private enterprise; new information and communication technologies that "shrink" the globe and global cultural changes involving a shift towards a universal world culture and the erosion of the nation state.

Some commentators such as Hall et al (2000) and Bryan and Rafferty (1999) have emphasised the importance of understanding the impact of global economy and other aspects of globalisation within a nation's borders, rather than thinking of globalisation as a demise of the nation state or as something that happens beyond a country's borders.

This paper examines these issues in terms of the impact on these changes of vocational education and training.

THE CHANGING NATURE OF WORK AND THE EMERGENCE OF NEW SKILLS SETS

Most attention in the research literature on the impact of globalisation on vocational education and training has been given to the impact of globalisation on changing the nature of work itself.

Two key themes in international research literature emerge to set the context for how the nature of work itself is now changing so rapidly. These are—

- ♦ the transformation of multinational organisations into *global economic corporate structures* with a consequential reduction in the importance of nation states and their domestic economies (e.g. OECD 1992, Ohmae 1995)
- ♦ the rise of the *information or knowledge-based economy*. There has been a significant amount of international literature on the subject of globalisation, structured and technological change and the emergence of the information or knowledge-based economy (e.g. Ahier & Esland 1999, Aronowitz & DiFazio 1999, Brown & Lauder 1999 Boisot 1998, OECD 1996, and Camoy et al 1993).

In particular the impact of the emergence of the knowledge based economy and its impact on changing the nature of work is a recurring theme in the literature.

Drucker (1993, p 38) argued that

Knowledge is the only meaningful resource today. The traditional factors of production — land, labour and capital — have not disappeared, but they have become secondary. They can be obtained and obtained easily, providing there is knowledge.

The impact of these developments is perhaps best described by Reich (1989) who examined the transformation of economies that is taking place from the *old economy* to the *new economy*. He argued that the 'old economy' was characterised by high-volume, standardised production with large numbers of identical items being produced over long production runs. In this 'old economy' most education and training is geared to implementation of instructions and specialised training in job tasks. Reich (1989) argued that in the 'new economy', a workforce capable of rapid learning and innovation is critical. Continuous retraining for more complex work and the transfer of high level skills gained in the workplace context needs to be underpinned by attitudes and learning skills gained long before in the education system prior to entry to the workforce. Reich argued that skills such as working effectively in groups, being able to analyse problems and develop solutions are paramount in the 'new economy'.

Investigation of these issues has also been the subject of increasing interest in Australia in recent years (e.g. Bryan and Rafferty 1999, Martin and Schumann 1997). In particular, Maglen (1994) and Maglen and Shah (1999) have examined changes in the nature of work in Australia arising from globalisation and rapid technological change. They argued that these changes are so profound that a restructuring of how jobs are classified is now required to better reflect the new nature of work. The three broad categories they proposed based on those put forward by Reich (1991), were—

- ♦ *symbolic analytical services* which are focussed on problem solving and strategic forms of work. This is a growing and most highly skilled area of work. Moreover these services are the most globally traded
- ♦ *in-person services* which include all those occupations which are in direct contact with the ultimate beneficiaries of their work. These services are also growing strongly but are rarely traded globally
- ♦ *routine production services* which entail work that is repetitive this being the type of work that is in decline in the economy. These are the services which are transferred from high labour cost to lower labour cost economies, and are then the most precarious of the three groups.

Maglen and Shah (1999) concluded that these developments have profound implications for the university and vocational education and training sectors if the acquisition of the new skills required in Australia are to be world's best practice.

Similarly Hobart (1999), in reviewing the impact of globalisation of vocational education and training in Australia, concluded that

The new competitive framework requires a broader set of skills; 'hard' (technical) and 'soft' (interpersonal and communication). (Hobart 1999, p 42)

Sheldrake (1997) recently made some similar observations. He argued we are facing two massive changes in the global economic system – these being the increasing dominance of the free market capitalist system around the world and an extraordinary increase in the rate at which new products and services are coming onto the market. He likens the current 'knowledge revolution' arising from rapid technological change in the late 20th century to being as profound for the way economies and work are organised as was the industrial revolution in its day. Sheldrake (1997, p 6) suggested the skills need to meet our future skill requirements might include—

- ◆ considerably enhanced *people skills*, especially in team leadership, communication, enabling, consulting with others and coaching
- ◆ *strategic skills* in developing businesses that take account of the increasing importance of knowledge as a factor (the factor) in competitive success
- ◆ *conceptual skills*, particularly those that enhance the ability to see issues from a variety of viewpoints, manage ambiguity and understand the complexities of other culture's values and priorities
- ◆ the ability to *empower others*, to be able to manage through dialogue and inter-personal negotiation rather than through power and control
- ◆ the capacity to recognise that *learning is an on-going process*, and to continuously re-think and re-examine approaches to work and other fundamental issues.

Research literature on the topic of the changing nature and patterns of work and its implications for vocational education and training was recently undertaken by Waterhouse et al (1999). The study is detailed and covers a lot of material. In summary they concluded that there have been fundamental changes to patterns of working that critically affect learning, yet education and training systems have not managed to keep pace with them. They stress the need for diversity, flexible and greater customisation of education and training as the key responses. Waterhouse et al (1999) identified the three key areas which will require much more emphasis in the future as being—

- ◆ the need to develop *learning communities*, rather than just focussing on the education and training of individuals
- ◆ the need to develop *collective learning* stressing group competencies, skills and knowledge, rather than persisting solely with the conventional focus of education and training systems on the individual
- ◆ the need to develop more *strategic and effective approaches to workplace learning*.

A study by Marginson (2000) also examined the changing nature of and organisation of work and the possible implications for the education and training systems in Australia. He identified six key elements that are driving the changing work environment as—

- ◆ *globalisation* which is creating a more international economy and culture
- ◆ *increased international competition* is driving an accelerated rate of technological change, particularly in information and communications technology, which are now the key sources of productivity increases

- ◆ *rapid technological change* which is leading to declines in 'blue collar work' and increases in skilled 'white collar work', with little or no increases in jobs overall
- ◆ *immense but uneven organisation change* in workplaces, where workplaces based on higher worker participation in teams and integrated multi-skilled jobs are tending to make the greatest gains in productivity
- ◆ *sharp increases in non-standard forms of work* such as in part-time, casual, outsourced or home-based work
- ◆ *a growing polarisation in incomes and in access to work, job security and technology* leading to more two income families on the one hand, and more 'no income families' (i.e. apart from welfare and the most marginal employment income) on the other.

Marginson (2000) argued that these developments have some fundamental implications for the way we need to think about education and training policies. This includes the need—

- ◆ to become *totally engaged with the global environment* or face obsolescence
- ◆ for workers to develop *higher levels of cognitive and interactive skills*
- ◆ for skills formation aimed at the closer integration of work practices into 'the innovation cycle', with much more emphasis on the *skills needed for continuous innovation*
- ◆ for education and training practitioners to become *more global, better networked and closer to the technological edge* in every industry
- ◆ for education and training policy and interventions by governments, to reflect *the emerging polarisation of access to employment* and the skills formation that goes with it.

This discussion serves to emphasise that the nature of work is changing so rapidly that the education and training approaches needed to prepare people for work of previous generations – that served us well for most of the 20th century – will not continue to meet our needs in the 21st century without further reform. Globalisation has clearly had a major influence on shaping new work forms and on new skill sets that are needed for that work.

Robinson (2000, p 6) concluded that

The world is changing fast these days. Globalisation of economies and rapid technological change critically affect all countries. The education and training systems in all countries have had difficulties in keeping up with the pace of change, yet it is vital that they do so. Some of the key technical skills we will need in 20 years time do not yet exist. This poses tremendous problems and challenges for the provision of education and training.

Robinson (2000, pp 6-7) argued that it is becoming apparent that many more workers in the new millennium will increasingly need—

- ◆ excellent *interpersonal and human relations* skills to get the best out of people and work well in team-working situations
- ◆ critical *analytical and interpretive* skills in order to handle and make sense of the enormous amount of information now available
- ◆ to be *entrepreneurial and enterprising*, irrespective of whether they run a business or work for others as an employee, so that new business opportunities are always being sought.

These skills will be just as important as any technical, para-professional or professional skills people hold. Developing this more diverse range of skills will require new responses from our education and training systems.

THE INFLUENCE OF AN EMERGING GLOBAL CULTURE

Research looking at the impact of globalisation of work and vocational education and training has rarely examined the impact of cultural shifts towards a globalised culture.

A wide variety of issues such as changing cultural and social values, new attitudes to the environment, reactions against global structural change are all important and can be expected to have an impact on the content and provision of vocational education. The information revolution is having a significant impact on globalising a nation's society and culture, as it is on a nation's economic and political sovereignty.

The key issue that is emerging is the global trend towards lower birth rates and smaller families. Changes in the demographic structure of populations towards rapidly aging populations across the world will have just a profound effect on nation's skill development needs and the economic and work factors that are usually associated with globalisation.

Robinson (2000) observed that in Australia, for instance, like most OECD countries, there has been a rapid aging of the population. The proportion of young people in the Australian population has been falling over a long period of time, with reductions in birth rates, increases in longevity and reductions in net immigration.

Robinson (2000) went on to report demographic projections that the number of 15-24 year olds in Australia is likely to remain at around 2.7 million people over the next two decades, even though the total population is likely to grow by nearly 20% overall over the same period. On the other hand, the number of people in Australia aged 45-64 years is forecast to grow over 40% over the next two decades from just over 4 million today to some 5.8 million by the year 2020.

The rapid aging of the population has been given recognition in developed economies in recent years (e.g. European Commission 1997). However, it has rarely received much attention in the world's developing nations. Yet even in large developing countries like Indonesia which currently has well over half the population aged 25 years or less and one third aged less than 15 years, projections are that by the year 2020 two thirds of the population will be over 25 years of age and only 20% will be under 15 years of age (Robinson 1999, p 8).

This dramatic shift in the structure of the populations of most nations means that education and training systems in the future will need to put as much focus on the learning needs of adults as they now do on young people. Post compulsory education and training policy around the world will need to expand the policy focus well beyond entry level education and training towards the learning/ re-skilling needs of adults. Of course entry level education and training will remain just as important in the future as it is today. The point is that skill formation policies of the future will need to properly focus on learning and skill needs of people of all ages.

THE KEY IMPLICATIONS FOR VET

While not every change and development that effects each nation can or should be attributed to globalisation, it is clear that globalisation is having a profound impact on economic, social and cultural change in all nations. Recent research in Australia by Bryan and Rafferty (1999) and Hall

et al (2000) cautions us against attributing everything to the global economy or of conceptualising as something beyond a nation's borders.

Nevertheless, the analysis in this paper leads to two key conclusions concerning the future direction of education and training provision as a result of global trends.

First, we need to ensure that all post-compulsory education and training becomes highly developed in imparting the generic skills that are becoming so essential across the whole labour force. This is particularly important in the new jobs emerging as a result of the increasing globalisation and the onset of the information age. Proficiency and competency only in the technical, para-professional or profession skills of a job alone will not be sufficient in most jobs.

The second key conclusion is that we need to overhaul the provision of post-compulsory education and training to cater better for the vastly increased amount of adult learning that will need to take place. Strategies to further the development of lifelong learning will be of prime importance. Just as we have developed pathways designed to improve the transition from school to work or from school to further and higher education and training for young people, we now need to turn our attention to the further development of "adult pathways".

The logistics of reinventing VET programs that are more capable of facilitating continuous and rapid learning in the new skills will require a very different and more diverse approach with new learning options and pathways. This will require—

- ◆ education and training programs that change continuously as the new skills required in the workforce change
- ◆ the development of new education and training programs and learning styles that are geared to meeting the particular needs of older learners, many of whom will already be employed and/or who already have qualifications.

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**IN SEARCH OF A GOVERNANCE FRAMEWORK OF
VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING FOR THE 21ST CENTURY:
AN INTERNATIONAL COMPARATIVE STUDY**

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Abstract : This paper focuses on the governance framework in relation to the decision-making process which designs, moulds and formulates the policy on vocational education and training (VET) to meet the needs of various industrial and commercial sectors in Hong Kong.

There has been a long history of an apparently close relationship among government, businessmen and academics who form a tripartite alliance in making decisions on VET within the framework of the government's co-optation strategies. Such a triple alliance may be regarded as a necessary and desirable outcome of the political system and environment in Hong Kong. It may also be a trend towards which many countries, whether developed or developing, have steered their system of policy-making in relation to VET.

This paper will attempt to analyze the concept of a co-optative decision-making system in relation to VET by comparing it to the traditional mode of decentralized decision-making process, which had been put into place since the 1960s. An overview of the decision-making systems of 10 selected countries will be made in order to understand why and how the policies on VET may be formulated in the context of the diversity of social and political systems in these countries and yet still follow a general pattern of cooperation and rationalization among various stakeholders. These 10 representative countries are Australia, Brazil, Canada, Finland, India, Italy, Philippines, Singapore, South Africa, and Switzerland. The decision-making systems of these 10 countries will be highlighted and compared with respect to the delivery of quality VET. Tables for comparison will be used as far as possible.

To conclude the paper, a more refined decision-making system, which extends the ideas of the triple alliance but also incorporates the involvement of various stakeholders, is recommended to foster further development in quality VET.

Practitioners often are confused by theories that offer ambiguous prescriptions for designing the institutional forms or governance structures in which organizational activities are conducted (Bello, Shirish, & Lohtia, 1997). This paper attempts to show that the governance framework in determining vocational training policy in Hong Kong relies on a triple alliance of government, businessmen and academics. A brief study of the corresponding decision-making bodies on VET policy of 10 selected countries is made for comparison with the case in Hong Kong. Conclusions and recommendations are made based on the observations.

VET in Hong Kong

In Hong Kong, the Vocational Training Council is the principal institutional agency set up by the government responsible for planning and implementing policy on vocational training. In 1982

when the Council was established, its total expenditure was only HK\$118 million (Hong Kong dollars). In 1998, the corresponding figure has increased by over 14 times to HK\$2,237 million after 16 years of operations. The Hong Kong case of the implementation of training policy generates valuable lessons on the need of an appropriate VET system. Hong Kong has dramatically reformed its vocational training system several times in the span of only two decades. Each reform has been introduced in concert with the transformation of the Hong Kong economy. Initially the change was from entrepot trading to industrialization. This was followed by a transition to a high technology, export-oriented economy. More recently, the move has been towards the development of an international investment and business centre, capturing high technology, high-valued-added manufacturing at the China mainland.

The history of the development of the Vocational Training Council illustrates the Hong Kong government's changing perception of the purpose of VET and the government's role in its provision of VET. In the 1960s, the government did not take any active part in making VET available and there were only a few government-run training schemes. The formation of the Industrial Training Advisory Committee in 1965 however showed that the government planned to do something about the provision of VET. Through the establishment of the Hong Kong Training Council in 1973, the government managed to put in place a list of training schemes supported by findings of economy-wide biennial manpower surveys conducted by the Council. The most significant scheme, the apprenticeship scheme, was implemented through the enactment of the Apprenticeship Ordinance in 1976. The Ordinance required an employer to enter into a contract of apprenticeship when engaging a youngster under 14 in one of 26 designated trades. According to the contract, employers were required to provide a comprehensive on-the-job training for their apprentices who would attend a 2 to 3 years part-time-day-release programme at technical institutes. The training however would be monitored by the government through the enforcement of the contract. By promoting and enforcing such a scheme, the government had become a "facilitator" and "provider" of VET.

1982 was a milestone for vocational training in Hong Kong. Since the establishment of the Vocational Training Council in that year, the government has built 2 technical colleges, 7 technical institutes, and 24 training centres providing VET for over 30,000 trainees annually. Considering a population of only six million, the trainee output is indeed an outstanding achievement. The vast number of trainees produced each year suggests that the government has become a major "provider" of VET in Hong Kong through these training centres.

Decision-making bodies

There are different views, valid or invalid, regarding the roles of the decision-making bodies of the Vocational Training Council in Hong Kong. They can be seen as being responsible for strategic formulation of long-term policies on VET, or primarily as organs that are created to legitimize the Hong Kong government's central policy, or as bodies overseeing the day-to-day functioning of the vocational training operations, or as protectors or defenders of the executive management against external political and social pressures and criticisms. In Hong Kong, boards and committees formed by the government may be described as a type of representative policy-making bodies which the government wishes to give voice in the decision-making process so as to represent defined interest groups and provide for a kind of forum for interaction and discussion.

In a study of the decision-making bodies of the Vocational Training Council, Hung (1998b) observed that there was in place a triple alliance among business-based (businessmen), knowledge-based (academics and professionals), and polity-based members (government officials and politicians) in decision-making bodies of the Council responsible for making policies on the provision of VET to the economy. He argues that "the triple alliance is a mechanism through which the government forms a partnership with three major types of interest groups in the community to

make operational decisions" (Hung, 1998b: 52). He concludes that although the decision-making system is currently working well, in order to build up a more effective vocational education and training system, more power and authority, especially the economic decisions of resource allocation and administration decisions relating to the running of training centres and technical institutes, should be devolved to these decision-making bodies.

As observed by Hung (1998b), the training boards and general committees are composed of members who are businessmen, industrialists, professionals, academics, and government officials. All major decisions will have to be discussed, argued, and approved by these representatives to ensure that the interests of all major stakeholders are protected. These decisions include not only the courses but also administrative functions relating to these courses. The following international comparative study will serve to illustrate the case that VET decision-making mechanism in Hong Kong is commonly found in many developed countries.

International Comparative Studies

A documentary research of 10 countries has been carried out with regard to the decision-making bodies on VET in these nations. These samples are selected on the basis of data availability rather than a comprehensive representation of the various types of decision-making bodies.

A policy on VET involves the decisions in defining what occupational roles are perceived as economically or politically important and how these roles can, through VET, be efficiently and sufficiently fulfilled. The former decision requires an economy-wide evaluation of the economical, technological, social or political significance of various occupations while the latter involves operational decisions as how appropriate training programmes are to be implemented. Most countries have established some forms of decision-making bodies in formulating and implementing policies on VET.

The purpose of the international comparative study is to *illustrate*, rather than to *prove*, the notion that major decisions on VET can be made in three ways: executive-led, expertise-led, and participative type of decision-making. These three types of decision-making processes show that the state of economic development has an observable correlation with the way VET decisions are made. Table 1 shows the economic development, geographic location, and political stability of these 10 countries.

Methodology of Analysis

There is no intention whatsoever in this paper to investigate the detailed political, social, economic or cultural characteristics of any countries. Due to the restraint in resources, there will be no quantitative statistical analysis of the composition of the decision-making bodies on VET in question. A brief analysis of the composition will suffice to identify the general pattern. Table 2 gives a list of the decision-making bodies on VET for Hong Kong and 10 selected countries.

Composition of Decision-making Bodies

All decision-making bodies are made of people and it is actually the people in these bodies that make decisions. The values and orientation of the individual members will become one of the key determinants of the decision-making system. An analysis of the rationale of decisions may be made through an examination of the people inside the decision-making bodies.

Following the methodology adopted by the study of Hung (1998b), members in the VET decision-making bodies are being grouped into four major categories: management-based, business-based, knowledge-based and polity-based. Management-based members are those who work directly for

and within the agencies offering VET. They are nominated by the agencies to represent their agencies' interests and explain the agencies' policy and practices to other members. Business-based members are affiliated to and in some cases nominated by associations or groups of businessmen and industrialists. They represent the various interests of the business sector. Knowledge-based members come from or are nominated by professional bodies as well as tertiary education institutions. Polity-based members come from pressure groups, such as labour unions, and political parties.

Table 3 shows the composition of membership of the decision-making bodies on VET in Hong Kong and 10 selected countries.

Types of Decision-making

Based on the analysis of the composition of decision-making bodies on VET as shown in Table 3, three major types of decision-making systems on VET can be identified: executive-led, expertise-led, and participative. Table 4 provides a description of these three types of processes.

VET in all the 10 countries are provided by the respective governments or their agencies. Executive-led way of decision-making on VET focuses on the leadership and centralized planning of the government. This is common for most developing countries where power for decision-making is held firmly by the central government. Expertise-led way of decision-making relies on the support and know-how of academics and professionals in making quality decisions. This is particularly important when the economy is undergoing drastic changes or facing major crises. Expertise-led decision-making can increase the chance of thriving in uncertainties. Participative way of decision-making is commonly found in developed economies. The system allows for thorough interaction and discussion among various stakeholders of VET for making quality decisions. Most decisions will be more likely acceptable by the general public.

Since 1982, by adopting the participative type of decision-making system on VET, Hong Kong has been going along the line taken by most developed countries. The progress of the Vocational Training Council in the past years has proved that the system has been working well.

The Analysis

The focus of this paper is on the decision-making system in relation to the strategic direction of the provision of VET in Hong Kong. It may be a common belief that it is the fiduciary duty of the government to ensure that an adequate supply of trained and skilled workforce is ready and willing to serve the economy. The government fulfils its roles and duties through the services provided by its agencies. As a government agency, the Vocational Training Council has the role and mission to take up the full responsibility of the planning, formulation and implementation of the policy on VET in Hong Kong. In order to fulfil its designated task, the Council must develop or maintain an effective decision-making system that can formulate appropriate VET to meet the changing needs of Hong Kong's economy.

The decision-making body on VET is only part of the government's machinery of decision-making. Boards and committees have a relatively long history in Hong Kong. After the riots in 1966 and 1967, the government has started to reconceptualise its role and plays a more active part in providing more social services to satisfy the needs of the community. The change in the political ideology can be illustrated in the Urban Council White Paper, which was issued in 1976. It states that "public participation in the management of public affairs *should be* achieved, to a very considerable extent, by a highly developed network of *decision-making* bodies which *should be* an important and very characteristic feature of Hong Kong scene" (Urban Council White Paper, 1976:46, italics added).

Since then Hong Kong government has set up quite a number of committees and boards. The Civil and Miscellaneous List 1998 gives details of 264 committees. There are 154 committees or boards that were set up under various ordinances. The reasons why such committees or boards have been set up or subvented may differ in each case. In general it appears that the government has decided that its objectives can be achieved more effectively or cheaply by an organization not under direct day-to-day governmental control and not bound by the strict rules of Civil Service Regulations. Such organizations are as a result better placed to respond promptly and flexibly to changes in demand and are expected to act like commercial firms in delivering their services. The establishment of the Vocational Training Council is a good example of such a movement.

The history of the development of VET in Hong Kong can demonstrate the trend toward decentralization and public participation in decision-making. The decision-making bodies on VET during the era of the Industrial Training Advisory Committee (1965-1973) were mainly to advise and make recommendations on possible VET problems. These "prototypes" of boards and committees had no real power other than advising the government.

The decision-making body on VET under the auspices of the Hong Kong Training Council (1973-1982), the Committee on Technical Institute, was set up to advise the government on the measures necessary to ensure that there was a comprehensive system of VET geared to the developing needs of Hong Kong. The executive function of the Committee on Technical Education was in place after the enactment of the Vocational Training Council Ordinance in 1982.

The decision-making system on VET since 1982 is in part based upon a belief that stronger partnership should be developed among the business, professional and academic sectors. In both the media and government documents, there is a commonly held conviction that the old elite system of higher education has failed the business sector. Whether this is a fair point is a question that exceed the scope of this paper. However, it is important to note that it is this argument that has influenced the current profile given to the Vocational Training Council in providing VET, and it is this assertion that has enabled the businessmen and professionals to play an important role in VET.

It is generally agreed that as a society proceeds with its economic development, the citizenry will tend to demand more participation in the decision-making process. That is why democracy is common in most developed countries. The need for decentralization may be addressed by the need for responsiveness. The Report of the Advisory Committee on Diversification proposes that the system of VET should be capable of producing a workforce which could adapt to changes and new needs. It attributes Hong Kong's economic success to the responsiveness, high mobility and high redeployability of its labour force. Decentralization may be said to enhance the ability of the administration to respond to the changing demands of the economy, decrease the remoteness of government agencies in relation to their clients and increase the accessibility to the citizens.

After nearly two decades of development, the VET system in Hong Kong may now have reached the point where decentralization becomes necessary and irreversible. An ideal governing board of a government agency should be responsible for determining the policies or strategies to be pursued by the agency, and for determining how the board's powers could be best exercised in the public interest within the objectives set out in the enabling legislation or articles of association. The governing board should have a leading and planning role in defining agencies' objective and strategies, choosing the appropriate technology, critically examining management plans, formulating an overall plan, communicating it to the organization, motivating managers or administrators to perform, monitoring performance against the plan and taking action when objectives are not reached. This should give a fairly clear picture of what an ideal governing board should like. In view of the changing economic environment, more power and authority should be given to the decision-making body on VET of the Vocational Training Council.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In spite of the limitation of a small sample size of merely 10 countries, the international comparative study however can still manage to illustrate that there are three types of decision-making bodies on VET in these economies. Since there is an obvious participative type of decision-making on VET policies in developed countries, Hong Kong therefore follows along this line in planning its proposed reform on the decision-making structure on VET. As there is an increased trend of technological development and higher expectation of economic welfare in the Hong Kong society, there is a need to enhance the responsiveness of service-providing agencies through a process of decentralization. It is therefore recommended here that in order to build up a more effective VET system, more power and authority, especially the economic decisions of resource allocation and administrative decisions relating to the running of VET programmes, should be decentralized.

In short, the old decision-making system has been working well and there is little need for reforming the system. Improvement can however be made by decentralizing further the decision-making power to the hands of the decision-making bodies with more participation of the various stakeholders. The recommendations in this paper only provide a starting point for the conception of an appropriate course of action to be undertaken. The key issue is that VET in Hong Kong, or other places in this world, is not simply a matter of improving labour productivity; it has a subtle political role in maintaining the economic prosperity of the entire society.

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Table 1
A List of 10 Selected countries for analysis

COUNTRIES	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION	POLITICAL STABILITY
Hong Kong	Newly developed	Asia-Pacific	stable
Australia	Newly developed	Asia-Pacific	stable
Brazil	Developing	S. America	moderate
Canada	Developed	N. America	stable
Finland	Developed	N. Europe	stable
India	Developing	Asia-Pacific	moderate
Italy	Developed	Europe	stable
Philippines	Developing	Asia-Pacific	moderate
Singapore	Newly developed	Asia-Pacific	stable
South Africa	Developing	Africa	moderate
Switzerland	Developed	Europe	stable

Note:

(1) Hong Kong is added to the list for comparison.

(2) The classification of economic development and political stability is based on World Bank reports in 1993 and 1994.

Table 2
A List of the Decision-making Bodies on Vocational Training Policy of 10 Selected Countries

COUNTRIES	BODIES RESPONSIBLE FOR MAKING DECISIONS ON VET
Hong Kong	Vocational Training Council
Australia	Australian National Training Authority
Brazil	National Industrial Learning Services
Canada	Canadian Training Boards at the local provincial level
Finland	National Board of Education
India	Central Advisory Board of Education (CABE)
Italy	Ministry of Education and Ministry of Labour
Philippines	Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA)
South Africa	Committee of Technical College Principals
Singapore	Institute for Technical Education
Switzerland	Association for the Promotion of Continuing Vocational Education (VFBW) in cantons.

Table 3
The Composition of the decision-making Bodies on VET
in the Selected Countries

<u>COMPOSITION OF MEMBERS</u>				
<u>Countries</u>	Management-based	Business-based	Knowledge-based	Polity-Based
Hong Kong	--	X	X	X
Australia	--	X	--	X
Brazil	--	--	X	--
Canada	--	X	X	X
Finland	--	--	X	--
India	X	--	--	--
Italy	X	--	--	--
Philippines	X	--	--	--
Singapore	--	X	X	--
	--	--	X	--
South Africa				
Switzerland	--	X	--	X

Table 4:
Three Types of Decision-making Systems on VET

	<u>TYPE I</u>	<u>TYPE II</u>	<u>TYPE III</u>
Types	Executive-led	Expertise-led	Participative
Characteristics	Members of all major decision-making bodies are management-based	Members of all major decision-making bodies are knowledge-based	Members of all major decision-making bodies are a mix of business-based, knowledge-based, and polity-based.
General pattern	Centralized	Think tank	decentralized
Examples (from 10 selected countries)	India Italy Philippines	Brazil Finland South Africa	Hong Kong, Australia Canada Singapore Switzerland
	Mainly developing countries (except Italy)	No distinct pattern but more common in countries where there are major changes in VET systems	Mainly developed countries

CROSS BORDER ACTIVITIES TO STRENGTHEN TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING SYSTEMS IN THE INFORMATION ERA

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Index: TVET; capacity building; cooperative activities; education for the world of work;
UNEVOC network; UNESCO

Abstract: This presentation aims to consider issues of cooperation in the international arena which are raised by the premise that technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is a critical and integral component of lifelong learning. The paper outlines the objectives and strategies of UNESCO's UNEVOC Network and challenges the audience to consider what strategies they can encourage in their own countries and regions that will facilitate international cooperation and subsequently strengthen TVET systems. Issues which will be discussed will include maximising national capabilities through training and cooperative activities such as articulation and recognition of courses across national borders, identifying competencies which are common across countries in regions, and identifying possible cooperative training activities etc. Informing the presentation are the outcomes and recommendations of the UNESCO Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education (*Lifelong learning and training: a bridge to the future*) held in Seoul, Republic of Korea in April 1999. These recommendations are the basis and the core of the UNESCO International Program on Technical and Vocational Education and Training which the General Conference of UNESCO authorized the Director-General to launch in November 1999 and fall into three key areas: improving Member States' TVET policy-making capacity, assisting Member States' institutional capacity-building and enhancing international co-operation.

TECHNICAL VOCATIONAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING AND LIFELONG LEARNING IN THE INFORMATION AGE

This presentation aims to consider the international issues which are raised by the premise that technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is a critical and integral component of lifelong learning. Also it explains how cross border activities carried out under the auspices of UNESCO/UNEVOC have contributed to strengthening of technical and vocational education systems in the Asia Pacific region. During the late 20th century, all sectors of education have been faced with issues surrounding the concepts of 'lifelong learning' and the complexities surrounding

the 'information age'. None more so than the technical vocational education and training sector as the nature of work changes; the education sector which in some countries sits between the compulsory education years (K-12) and higher education, in others, forms part of the upper secondary education years.

The Delors Report (Learning: the Treasure Within 1996) emphasised and concluded that education must be supported by four pillars; learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. As Colin Power stressed at the recent UNEVOC Congress in Seoul, 'the information society of the 21st century will put greater value on learning to do, on the skills and competencies needed to put knowledge into action... Today, more than ever before, technical vocational education and training has become a necessity not only for young people who will have to prepare themselves for the challenges of the next century, but also for the entire population of each country so that every individual can play an active role in the world of the 21st century that seeks to narrow economic and gender disparities while preserving the integrity of the environment.' (UNESCO 1999: 88)

Interwoven with these personal imperatives are the demands of enterprises and industries which require workers to have skills which will enable them 'to be smarter, faster, more effective, and more efficient, less environmentally damaging, produce less waste and to waste less time', to make use of new technologies, new ways of doing business and the effects of globalisation. (Bartram 2000: 1)

These demands affect not only young people. In the developing world these additional demands are being placed on those who have not had access to basic education and, for the developed world, on those who may be already in the workforce or those who due to work restructuring are facing career changes. In the words of the previous Director General of UNESCO:

To keep pace with changes in work organisation and production technology, people need to increasingly renew and upgrade their skills. This calls for the integration of technical and vocational education into lifelong learning systems. Indeed, technical and vocational education must articulate more effectively with secondary, higher and adult education. In the developing world, particularly in rural areas, providing basic skills education is still the challenging task. The promotion of literacy alone, however, is not sufficient. Experience demonstrates that a combination of literacy education and vocational skills learning is an effective method of empowering people to improve their standard of living. The inclusion of vocational subjects in the general education curricula equips students with basic technological and vocational knowledge and awareness. The integration of vocational skills training in general education is also likely to contribute towards gender equity in the technical professions. (UNESCO 1999: 77)

These issues are particularly pertinent in the diverse Asia Pacific region which contains the largest proportion of the world's population which includes the most disadvantaged in the world; an area which is comprised of both the smallest and the largest countries in the world, many of which are struggling to provide basic infrastructures to support their peoples, let alone sophisticated information technology.

UNEVOC

UNESCO's response to these demands has been the establishment of UNEVOC, UNESCO's International Project on Technical and Vocational Education. The project is dedicated to developing and improving technical and vocational education in UNESCO's Member States with a focus on

information exchange, networking and international cooperation. The following information about the project is based on the UNEVOC web pages (UNEVOC 2000).

During 1987 UNESCO held its first International Congress for the Development and Improvement of Technical and Vocational Education in Berlin, Germany. Strong support was shown by the member countries present to establish a mechanism for the international exchange of information on technical and vocational education. Subsequently, the General Conference of UNESCO, at its twenty-fifth session in 1989

- 'adopted the Convention on Technical and Vocational Education. This standard-setting instrument provides a coherent set of concepts and guidelines for the development of technical and vocational education in Member States. It pays particular regard to the assuming of public responsibility for framing policies and defining strategies in order to ensure that technical and vocational education is considered to be an integral part of the education system.
- invited the Director-General of UNESCO to carry out a feasibility study on the establishment of an International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education.

This feasibility study recommended that UNESCO's activities in technical and vocational education should concentrate on technical and vocational education as a component of the overall education system. Based on that feasibility study, which was completed early in 1991, the General Conference of UNESCO decided, at its twenty-sixth session in 1991, to launch the International Project on Technical and Vocational Education (UNEVOC). This decision was confirmed by the General Conference of UNESCO at its sessions in 1993, 1995 and 1997.' (UNEVOC 2000).

In accordance with that decision, UNEVOC is designed

- to contribute to the development of systems of technical and vocational education
- to promote infrastructures in research, development and planning
- to facilitate information and communication in these fields.

STRUCTURES AND MECHANISMS

UNEVOC is carried out under the responsibility of the Education Sector of UNESCO supported by an International Advisory Committee which advises the organization on the preparation and implementation of the UNEVOC program. Many activities within UNEVOC are executed on a regional basis and UNESCO's Regional Offices play an important role in the implementation of the project:

- **Africa:** Regional Office for Education in Africa (BREDA)
- **Arab States:** Regional Office for Education in the Arab States (UNEDBAS)
- **Asia and the Pacific:** Principal Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific (PROAP)
- **Latin America and the Caribbean:** Regional Office for Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (OREALC)

Following the decision on UNEVOC taken by the General Conference in 1991, the Government of the Federal Republic of Germany offered to host an Implementation Unit in Berlin. Germany has provided premises and equipment for this Unit (opened in 1993) in addition to dedicated staff under the leadership of Mr Hans Kronner.

An international team evaluated the UNEVOC project in 1996-1997, resulting in a set of recommendations to the Director-General of UNESCO regarding the ongoing development of the project.

THE UNEVOC WORK PLAN FOR 1998-1999

As an indication of the work carried out under UNEVOC, the following activities were carried out during 1998-1999:

- International exchange of ideas, experience and studies on policy issues
- Strengthening of national research and development capabilities
- Facilitating access to databases and documentation; strengthening the UNEVOC Network.

International exchange of ideas, experience and studies on policy issues

This area provides opportunities for the Member States to exchange views on policy issues in technical and vocational education and aims to contribute to reducing the gap between the industrialised and developing countries.

Key areas which formed the focus for this activity included:

- Raising the status of technical and vocational education
- Coordination of policies for education, training, and related activities
- Orientation of education towards the world of work
- Linkage between technical and vocational education institutions and the world of work.

The key actions for this program area were based on the recommendations of the evaluation of the UNEVOC Project in 1996-1997 including

- a draft strategy for UNESCO's future role in the development of technical and vocational education (to become after the 1999 General Conference meeting, the Long Term Program on Technical and Vocational Education).
- the Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education (Seoul, 1999) in cooperation with the Government of the Republic of Korea, and with United Nations and other agencies. The Congress was preceded by a series of Regional Symposia in each of the five regions, Asia and the Pacific (Adelaide, South Australia March 1998), Europe (Crete, Greece September 1998), Arab States (Abu Dhabi November 1998), Africa (Nairobi, Kenya November 1998), Latin America and the Caribbean (Quito, Ecuador November 1998), Eastern Europe (Moscow March 1999).

Strengthening of national research and development capabilities

Key areas which formed the focus for this activity included:

- International transfer and adaptation of curricula;
- Promoting innovative concepts in technical and vocational education;
- Providing equal access of girls and women to technical and vocational education;
- Staff development.

The key actions for this program area in the Asia Pacific region included:

- regional curriculum development projects, for example, the design of curricula on entrepreneurial skills for small business through workshops in Australia, India and China. This curriculum has also now been implemented in China. training of and recruitment standards for teachers and trainers in technical and vocational education
- advisory, project formulation and other consultancy services to identify and prepare project proposals for submission to funding agencies.
- development of the capacity of UNEVOC Centres to contribute to planning, development and research in technical and vocational education on the national level, supported through training workshops and small-scale projects.
- the feasibility of developing a training model for the Asia/Pacific region, explored in an expert meeting convened in Pakistan.

Facilitating access to data bases and documentation; strengthening the international networks

The aims of this program area included:

- to enhance UNESCO's clearing house function in technical and vocational education,
- to facilitate access to relevant information,
- to facilitate interaction and to strengthen co-operation in the UNEVOC network.

Workshops to provide training to facilitate the exchange of TVET information and documentation and to identify the infrastructure needed to facilitate communication between existing national and regional institutions in technical and vocational education were held in the Asia Pacific and African regions. The establishment of databases in Australia (the inclusion of UNEVOC and the International Labour Office (ILO) Asia Pacific Skills Development Information Network (APSDIN) data in the VOCED database, hosted by the Australian National Centre for Vocational Education Research) and Canada (Canadian UNEVOC Centre at the University of Manitoba) have been concrete outcomes of the actions taken during this period.

Across the world, the UNEVOC network includes more than 160 institutions from 110 Member States. In the Asia Pacific region the network includes 47 institutions in 30 Member States. Co-operation among these institutions has been encouraged to:

- improve the flow of information
- share experiences, problem solving ideas and research results
- enhance international co-operation.

Strategies to achieve these outcomes have included the publication (in print and electronic forms) and dissemination of

- the quarterly *UNEVOC Info* in both English and French, Arabic and Spanish. This publication supports the Network with relevant information and also serves as a communication instrument among the participating institutions and experts.
- studies and document on technical and vocational education
- the Directory of UNEVOC Centres and UNEVOC Associate Centres

The clearing house function of UNEVOC has been facilitated through the development and management by the Berlin Implementation Office of:

- the UNEVOC Web Site
- an Internet e-mail Document Server which facilitates the retrieval of documents
- an electronic mail server which provide users with an interactive facility for communication and exchange of information with one another and with other interested professionals
- Internet seminars to support UNEVOC Centres in their efforts to utilise modern information and communication technology for international communication and information retrieval, in particular Electronic Mail and the WorldWideWeb.

Co-operation among UNEVOC Centres has been promoted through the following activities:

- assisting UNEVOC Centres in finding appropriate partner institutions and sponsors from the private sector for joint activities
- encouraging bilateral and multilateral research and development projects
- facilitating study visits, fellowships, and internships for experts in the UNEVOC network to gather experience in other environments within that network, including Regional Offices and UNEVOC Berlin
- encouraging continual dialogue and information exchange among UNEVOC Centres.

UNESCO SECOND INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS ON TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

UNESCO's Second International Congress on Technical and Vocational Education (*Lifelong learning and training: a bridge to the future*) was held in Seoul, Republic of Korea in April 1999 and has been described as a landmark event in the development of global technical vocational education and training. The objective of the Congress was 'to give its Member States an opportunity to discuss how the field of Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) should adjust to the needs of a rapidly changing world. Since globalization and dramatic developments in the information and communication technologies are expected to be features of the early years of the twenty-first century, it was felt that TVET must adapt to adequately prepare people for the world of work and responsible citizenship'. (UNEVOC 2000)

The Congress identified the major challenges to education at the beginning of the 21st century and the discussions addressed the following themes:

- Challenges to education and training: the changing demands of the world of work
- Improving systems for education and training throughout life
- Reforming the education and training process
- Promoting access of special groups to technical and vocational education and training
- The changing role of government and social partners in technical and vocational education and training
- Enhancing international cooperation in technical and vocational education and training.

The Seoul Congress formulated a set of recommendations for upgrading TVET that were listed under the caption *Technical and Vocational Education and Training: A Vision for the Twenty-first*

Century. These recommendations are the basis and the core of the UNESCO International Program on Technical and Vocational Education and Training which the General Conference of UNESCO authorized the Director-General to launch in November 1999.

OBJECTIVES FOR THE FUTURE

The International long-term program for the development of TVET includes the following objectives and strategies.

Objective 1: Strengthening TVET as an integral component of lifelong learning

TVET policies need to be redesigned in order to respond to the varied needs of all members of society, and to help them achieve personal and social development. UNESCO's activities in this area aim at:

- Infusing into general education curricula appropriate content for the young to understand the nature and process of the world of work
- Improving the links between TVET and other sectors of education, and developing articulation between education and training systems
- Fostering the role of governments and the involvement of all stakeholders particularly the private sector.

Objective 2: Orienting TVET for sustainable development

TVET should play a pivotal role in developing a new generation of individuals who must face the challenge of contributing to sustainable socio-economic development. The Program will be implemented with the aims of:

- Ensuring that TVET is an integral part of each nation's sustainable development agenda, and its education and human resource development strategy
- Incorporating environmental issues into all TVET teaching and learning situations
- Providing TVET in the service sector to ensure environmentally sound economic growth and employment creation.

Objective 3: Providing TVET for all

Besides preparing people for the world of work, TVET is expected to be an instrument for social cohesion and integration. UNESCO supports its Member States' efforts to make TVET programs comprehensive and adequately inclusive. UNESCO will aim to achieve the following:

- Promoting special initiatives and efforts to ensure equal access to TVET for girls and women
- Making TVET programs available to the unemployed and various marginalized groups
- Reorienting vocational guidance and counselling to reach out to all members of society, and promoting flexible access to learning and training throughout life.

These objectives will be implemented towards the achievement of these objectives by adopting three key strategies:

Improving Member States' TVET policy-making capacity

The following activities will be undertaken to assist Member States' efforts in formulating policies for the renovation and integration of TVET as a component of their national development agenda:

- Providing national policy-makers with tools of analysis, comparative information, statistics and best practices in TVET delivery models
- Conducting international, regional and sub-regional meetings for policy-makers, professionals and researchers to exchange views
- Identifying the factors that determine the quality and relevance of TVET with a view to improving its effectiveness, and establishing assessment standards and systems to ensure that TVET is provided in line with international standards.

Assisting Member States' institutional capacity-building

UNESCO will undertake the following activities to strengthen TVET institutions' capacities in research, development and training:

- Providing guidelines and supporting national and regional activities for the preparation of TVET teaching and training personnel
- Assisting the Member States to use information and communication technologies as a tool for teaching and learning
- Enhancing the ability of Member States to transfer, adapt and customise programs and curricula, and assessment and evaluation techniques to local needs.

Enhancing international co-operation

The program will aim to launch major initiatives towards transforming the delivery of technical assistance and fostering joint action and common approaches by the international agencies in their support of TVET by:

- Establishing close co-operation with other United Nations agencies, donor institutions, development banks and NGOs
- Initiating international events that would draw public attention to TVET
- Advocating TVET as an integral part of the development agenda of bilateral and multilateral donors and financial institutions.

Implementation

The Program will be implemented by UNESCO Headquarters (Education Sector), relevant field offices, particularly those in Bangkok, Beirut, Dakar and Santiago, and a new UNESCO International Centre for Technical and Vocational Education and Training in Bonn, Germany.

The current UNEVOC Network will be transformed into an international framework for common support and co-operation in TVET, and each UNEVOC Centre will be encouraged to strengthen national networks. UNESCO will confer the title of Regional Centre of Excellence on a few selected UNEVOC Centres to facilitate regional co-operation, and will support these centres in their networking and program activities.

To achieve these outcomes, it must be recognised that UNESCO cannot act alone and that 'while UNESCO is the leading agency in the United Nations System in the field of education, many other intergovernmental and non-governmental agencies also deal with various aspects of education and

training. In planning and implementing its program of technical and vocational education, UNESCO will seek to develop close co-operation with other partners giving the program an interagency character...(for example) UNESCO and the ILO have agreed in principle to formulate a joint policy framework in technical and vocational education and training with the goal of strengthening the currently ongoing co-operation between the two Organisations in this field'. (UNESCO 1999: 33)

ISSUES THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED

The development of the UNEVOC Network is a strong beginning to strengthen the role of TVET as a key component of lifelong learning, personal satisfaction and goal achievement for the world's population. The objectives and actions of the Network are also an excellent example of how cross border activities can be carried out to strengthen technical and vocational education systems. However there still remain key issues which need to be addressed and taken into account in the role that UNEVOC can play. These include:

- Adaption of TVET programs to meet the skills requirements, employment and development status of member countries
- Redesign of TVET programs to meet these needs
- Influence of socio-economic conditions (UNESCO 1999: 89)
- Funding for TVET from various sources (government and non-government agencies, employer and learner)
- Overcoming barriers to participation in TVET
- Creating opportunities for participation by minority groups
- Skilling, and recognition of skills, of TVET teachers
- Recognition of the value of TVET
- Discrepancy between supply and demand
- Partnerships between education and industry
- Appropriate curriculum models
- Appropriate research (UNESCO 1999: 57-8)

CONCLUSION

Colin Power, immediate past Deputy Director General of UNESCO, provided a powerful message in his concluding state at the UNEVOC Congress in Seoul that is appropriate to conclude this paper. He stated that:

We strongly believe that the provision of technical and vocational education and training aiming to prepare qualified technicians and skilled and semi-skilled workers should be an essential component of the development agenda of all countries. TVET is a bridge to the future, but there must be an employment road to which it leads, otherwise we create further problems. Thus we need not just a revitalised and more coherent TVET program, but a new vision for TVET and employment – we need new models of TVETE (technical vocational education and training and employment), linking education, training, employment and social welfare, nationally and internationally. (UNESCO 1999: 89)

What are your strategies to achieve this?

What will be your role in developing international partnerships?

How can you encourage international cooperation and subsequently strengthen TVET systems in your region?

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UNEVOC (2000): (Web page) <http://www.unevoc.de>

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THE COMPETENCY OF CROSS-CULTURE OF EXPATRIATES IN THE MULTINATIONAL CORPORATION

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Index: Expatriation, multinational corporation, competency, cross-culture, globalization, business strategy, expatriate development

Abstract: Confronting the tendency of globalization, the human resource development of expatriation and the foreign workers in multinational firms act an important role for a global business strategy.

Furthermore, more frequently transactions and interactive trades between countries provide the employee more chances to encounter foreigner who works at same corporation.

Much literature has pointed out that many failures of expatriate resulting from the worker can not adapt to the host culture, or can not transfer their qualified capability and attitude to the oversea jobs.

In other words, the adaptability to the host culture is the essential factor to the success of expatriation. Contexts between different cultures maybe lead potential conflict and face unexpected shock. It is vital for multinational firms that ensure and enhance the performance and the productivity of workers from different countries. How to manage the cultural diversity and get the best practice or solution to cultural conflict are both important issues.

In this study, it will explore the factor and cause for successful expatriation. The paper will examine the key factors that affect the result of expatriation and provide as the reference to those multinational companies.

INTRODUCTION

Global organizations or multinational companies should shed their national identity, and highly adapt to changes in the trend of the environment, and perceive the global tendency that may affect the future. It is very sophisticated that global organization require not only the global business but also a different mindset and adaptable corporate culture.

We should understand the evolution from domestic company to global company, identify the essence for type of organization first, and then plan the human resource development strategy.

(Table 1)

Table 1**Corporate Cross-Cultural Evolution**

	PHASE 1	PHASE 2	PHASE 3	PHASE 4
	<i>Domestic</i>	<i>International</i>	<i>Multinational</i>	<i>Global</i>
Primary Orientation	Product/Service	Market	Price	Strategy
Strategy	Domestic	Multi-domestic	Multinational	Global
Perceptive	Ethnocentric	Polycentric or Regio-centric	Multinational	Global/Multi-centric
Culture sensitivity	Unimportant	Very important	Somewhat important	Critically important
With whom	No one	Clients	Employees	Employees and clients
Level	No one	Workers and clients	Managers	Executives
Strategic assumption	"One way"/ "One-best-way"	"Many-best-ways" equifinality	"One-least-cost-way" "	"Many-best-ways" simultaneously

Because the tendency of globalization, multicultural training programs would address the diversity issues which impact on the performance of expatriates. (Table 2)

Table 2**The GI-LR Framework for IHR Strategy**

<i>Consistency Benefits of Global Integration</i>	<i>High</i>	Ethnocentric HR Strategy	Geocentric HR Strategy
	<i>Low</i>	Regiocentric HR Strategy	Polycentric HR Strategy
		<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
		<i>Differentiation Benefits of Local Responsiveness</i>	

Corporate globalization not only increases the importance for effective cross-cultural communication between employees and the contacts with people in other countries but also provide a worldwide view of employees' involvement in multinational business. (Table 3)

Table 3

International HR Strategies for MNC's

<i>High</i> <i>Need for Human Resource Consistency</i>	Worldwide Human Resource Management	Umbrella Human Resource Management
	Adhere Human Resource Management	Decentralized Human Resource Management
<i>Low</i>		
	<i>Low</i>	<i>High</i>
	<i>Need for Human Resource Localization</i>	

Sometimes, cultural values and beliefs conflicting may contribute to the misunderstanding regarding hospitality, politeness, and increase the friction between both parties.

Expatriation has become an important issue for an organization's globalization. In these days, many papers have focus on the high cost which resulting from expatriate failure caused by the hardship of adapt to the host culture.

Research Aims

The aim of this paper would examine the factors that expatriates' behaviors contributing to the success and failure. So the study would attempt to answer the following questions:

- ◆ *What factors contribute expatriate's success or failure?*
- ◆ *What types of behavior for expatriates' demonstration would make the expatriation more effective in cross-cultural setting?*
- ◆ *How to manage the strategic expatriation effectively?*

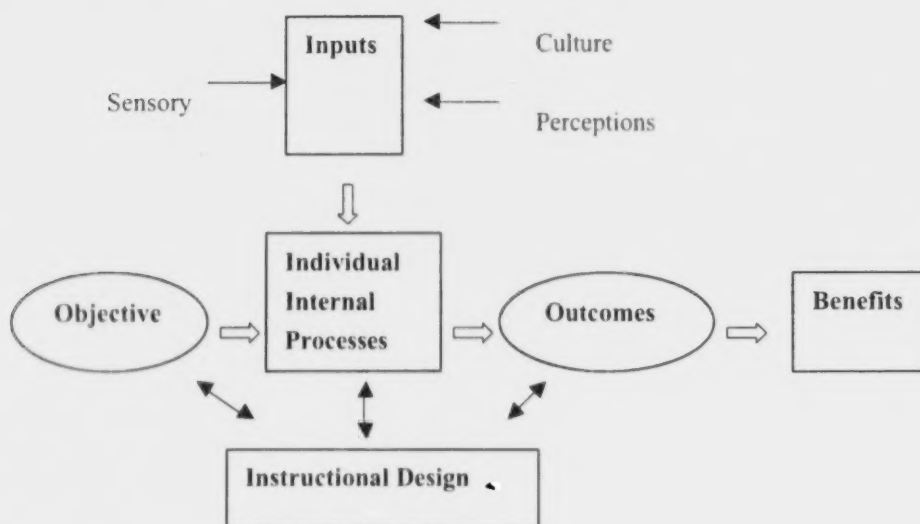
Expatriate Development

There are many types for global expatriate, including specific global management training specific country workshop global briefings that will impact the employee's performance oversea.

Multicultural business shows the traits of extraordinary opportunities and professional challenges, executives would get the qualified knowledge and skills to implement the strategies of corporation into operating in global markets. The effective expatriate would know the distinctions between international, multinational companies. They also would check the content of culture and learn management skills in analyzing and solving multinational issues (Table 4).

Table 4

Key Elements for an International Training System



Source: Peter Beck chi, Director of training, Word Environment Center.

Global Training Methods

There are several fundamental cross- culture training methodologies which the trainer could adopt. Adapted from Landis and Brisling (1983)

- ◆ *Information or fact-oriented training:* Trainee are presented via lectures, videotapes, and reading materials with various facts about the country in which they are about to live.
- ◆ *Attribution training:* The attribution approach focuses on explanations of behavior from the point of view of the native. The goal is to learn the cognitive standards by which the host-nationals process behavior input so that the trainee can understand why the host-nationals behaves as they do and do and adapt his or her own behavior to match the standards of behavior in the host country
- ◆ *Culture awareness training:* The aim is to study the values, attitudes, and behaviors that are common in one's own culture, so that the trainees better understand how culture affects his or her own behaviors. Once this is understood, it is assumed that he or she can better understand how culture affects human behavior in other countries.
- ◆ *Cognitive-behavior modification:* The focus here is to help trainees link what they find to be rewarding and punishing in their own subculture and then to examine the rewarding and punishing structure in the host- culture. Through an examination of the differences and similarities, strategies are developed to help trainees obtain rewards and avoid punishments in the host culture.
- ◆ *Experimental learning:* The goal of this approach is to involve the trainees as active participants.

to introduce the nature of life in another culture by actively experiencing that culture via field trips, complex role plays, and cultural simulation.

- ◆ *Interaction training:* Here trainees interact with natives or returned expatriates to become more comfortable with host- nationals and to learn the first- hand experience of the returned expatriates. The methods can range from in-depth role-playing to casual, informal discussions.

Source: J. Stewart Black and Mark Mendenhall. A "Practical But Theory-Based Framework for Selecting Cross-Culture Training Methods," *Human Resource Management*, Winter 1989. Reprinted by permission from John Wiley & Sons, Inc

It is basic that trainer would keep the principle in mind and put into practice that "Go to the people, start with what they are, build on what they have. By the way, the trainer will go with participants, assist them in their new way. To ensure all interventions will get from an aspect of mutual respect.

The global organization and executive expatriate

In global organization The executive expatriate should deliver new patterns of information about the world, and know the important content of overall political, social, economic, and cultural issue. To realize those content of issue would help expatriate executives define the competition. They own the traits which more adaptability, multinational thinking, and the capability to impel people toward a global vision. In the future, the expatriate executive would have more changes to deal with the unpredicted admit failure, exit with ambiguity, and examine the sense of theirselves.

The recently study exhibit that successful executives are more self-aware than their less successful counterparts. Many study confirm that the executive will need a new set of skills. The ASTD's Executive Development Seminar camp up with a set of current and future executive traits (Table) and a skill model for the new global executive (Table 5)

Table 5

Executive Traits Now and in the Future

Current Traits	Future Traits
All knowing	Leader as learner
Domestic vision	Global vision
Predicts the future from the past	Intuits the future
Caring for individuals	Caring for institutions and individuals
Owns the vision	Facilitates the visions of others
Uses power	Uses power and facilitations
Dictates goals and methods	Specifies Processes
Alone at the top	Part of executive team
Value order	Accepts the paradox of order amid chaos
Monolingual	Multicultural
Inspires the trust of boards and shareholders	Inspires the trust

The Criteria for effective Expatriate assignment

Successful expatriate assignment requires adjustment to the host culture. There is some distinct criterion committed to Successful expatriate assignment.

The capability to develop helpful relationships with host national colleagues, and establish a wider range of mindset patterns and behaviors. When international expatriate managers could carry the specific set of diversity into the strategic human resource management, then expatriate should demonstrate the capability to fit the particular cross-cultural condition and contribute to successful performance.

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PROVISION OF PROFESSIONAL TRAINING TO MEET GLOBAL PROCUREMENT CHALLENGES IN HONG KONG

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Index: Professional Training, Global Procurement, Hong Kong

Abstract: The technology today is so fast that quickly changes the traditional business process. Supply chain management is becoming the profession of the future – an extension of buyers' job. New professional education in purchasing and supply management should be demanded by Hong Kong's business world to maintain its status as a global procurement centre and a commercial window of China.

INTRODUCTION

Records show that as early as the thirteenth century B.C. purchasing played an important role in business. Nowadays, in the developed countries, it would be difficult to find an organisation, large or small, that does not have the purchasing function. Any savings you make on the purchasing side go straight to the bottom line (*BBCI Business Breakfast, 3 June 1998*) so the successful implementation of purchasing principles can definitely have a positive impact on the overall success of an organisation. The technology today is so fast that predicting the future gets harder all the time. Purchasing and supply management is no exception - they are bound to face many changes. Recently, there are a number of notable moves of some giant companies signify the drastic changes in establishing electronic marketplace that might quickly evolve the traditional business process.

Moreover, it was pointed out by Vice Prime Minister, Mr. Wu Bang Guo in the Beijing International Logistics Conference held in November 1999 that purchasing and supply chain management would have significant growth in the 21st century. Starting from 1 Jan 2000, the National Tendering Law became effective in China, which was a milestone for China's professional practice of procurement. And targeted in 2020, the government purchase of China will be opened to APEC.

In the light of the foregoing, new professional education in purchasing and supply management should be demanded by Hong Kong's business world in order to maintain its status as a global procurement centre and a commercial window of China. Such new professional training shall impact on Mainland's supply chain development because its education infrastructure in this profession is not mature.

However, the educationists in Hong Kong still deem purchasing as an operational and narrow function, do not respond quickly to this speedy and dynamic changes in Hong Kong's business environment in training up 'business persons' in purchasing management. Therefore, the goals of this study were to investigate:

1. the job market and opportunities for purchasing personnel,
2. the implications of recent trend of supply chain globalisation,
3. the skills required from the view of employers and practitioners, and
4. how an enhanced vocational education is to be developed to cater for such vast development.

METHODOLOGY

The information was collected through the following four channels apart from literature review.

1. A job market survey had been done to study the market demand of the purchasing personnel by analysing the jobs advertised in different newspapers as detailed in Appendix 1.
2. 1442 questionnaires were sent to practitioners, industries and past graduates of purchasing courses (both part-time and full-time) from Aug to Oct 1999 to study their expectations of purchasing training. 145 were undelivered mail due to outdated addresses and 105 completed responses were returned and analysed.
3. 153 past graduates were interviewed over the phone about their career development and expectation of procurement training.
4. Key persons of professional bodies— The Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply (CIPS, UK) and The Institute of Purchasing and Supply of Hong Kong were interviewed of the trends of purchasing profession.

JOB MARKET AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PURCHASING PERSONNEL

From the job vacancies in the newspaper listed in Appendix 1, it is found that:

1. Out of 108,085 vacancies, 19.6% fall in the category of purchasing (Appendix 2).
2. 74% of those purchasing jobs require Technical Institute (TI), F.5 and F.7 graduates. Needless to say, the employability of TI graduates is higher than that of F.5 and F.7 graduates who do not have any vocational nor professional training (Appendix 3).
3. Chances of advancement in career are available for purchasing personnel and the salary ranges for different positions are satisfactory. However, merchandisers seem to have higher salaries than those work as purchasers and storekeepers have the lowest salaries (Appendix 4 and 5).

From our questionnaires and telephone interviews, it was found that the career development of our graduates was in line with our findings from the newspaper. There is a great demand of purchasing personnel and their prospects are flourishing.

1. Even in the economic downturn, 81% of our fresh purchasing graduates in 1999 could find their first jobs within one month (Appendix 6) and the starting salary was between HK\$7,000 to HK\$7,500 (Appendix 7). Some of their salaries have reached HK\$8,000 to HK\$8,500 after working for a few months. The salary range for the past graduates is from HK\$7,500 to HK\$30,000 and the median is HK\$15,000.
2. 89% of the past graduates have been promoted to supervisory or managerial grade (Appendix 8). Examples of the posts they are holding are Assistant Supplies Officer in Government Supplies Department, Supplies Officer in Cathay Pacific, Purchasing Manager in Sun Generation, Senior Purchasing Officer in Hong Kong International Terminal and in Philips HK Ltd. 77% are still working in the purchasing and supply field but those 14% handling general administration have to take care of materials management duties such as inventory control and procurement. Therefore, strictly speaking, 91% of them are still employing their purchasing expertise (Appendix 9).
3. Apart from purchasing, our graduates are competent to work in other areas such as warehousing management, production and materials planning, logistics and marketing.

Therefore, in our curriculum design, we equip our students with multi-skills and prepare them to work in any function of the supply chain.

IMPLICATIONS OF RECENT TREND OF SUPPLY CHAIN GLOBALISATION

In the past few months, some giant companies of different industries have notable moves in their purchasing and supply functions such as Sears, Carrefour and Oracle have formed the first B2B online exchange for the retail industry (Appendix 10). The implications of those events are:

1. Fast Growth of e-commerce

According to Gartner Group, the value of B2B e-commerce transactions in the Asia/Pacific, outside Japan, is forecast to grow at a compound annual growth rate of 155% from 1999 through 2004, and will reach a size of US\$995.8 billion in 2004. The Internet will become the backbone of electronic purchasing. It will be used for purchasing transactions such as order tracking, funds transfer and receipt acknowledgement. Systems for low strategic value purchases will stress on electronic efficiency while the challenge will be using the information created by electronic commerce in a truly strategic fashion.

2. Speed up the development of Supply Chain Management

The concept of SCM has been in operation for more than 20 years. It is only in the last few years that SCM-enablers and its technologies such as Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), product barcode labeling, Point of Sales (POS) scanning and Cross Docking have begun to be fully exploited to the benefit of consumer, vendor and retailer. The improved utilisation of SCM technologies and enablers can help us to improve inventory performance, reduce working capital, allow an improved return on assets by reducing the warehouse and storage space required providing appropriate replenishment. Inventory turns of two or four times per year are still very common but 'best practice' retailers can achieve more than 10 inventory turns, with a strongly positive impact on their financial performance.

3. Lots of opportunities in SCM

'According to the export supply chain management road map study commissioned by the HKANA, through implementation of the supply chain management the export industry has the potential to save HK\$9.2 billion... businesses were reminded that use of supply chain ideas is still relatively immature in Hong Kong and that much needs to be done.' (*South China Morning Post*, 19 May 2000). The same SCM survey indicates the major barriers are mainly due to lack of training and cultural problems. Comparatively, 'lack of technology' is the least serious problem that can be promptly improved by more capital investment (Appendix 11). However, much more effort has to be spent to change one's mindset and vision.

4. Reduction of head counts in tactical purchasing

Despite the encouraging figures from our research, in the long run, as tactical purchasing becomes more automated, head counts in purchasing departments will be reduced. However, according to the research paper 'The Future of Purchasing and Supply: A Five- and Ten-year Forecast', structural purchasing departments will not be eliminated and supplier evaluation and development will remain in-house. That means the education and training provided should enable our students to acquire a much greater degree of professional skill than may have been sufficient in the past.

Summarising the four points above, we can forecast that Internet marketplaces with dynamic pricing will reduce the sourcing and negotiation effort and will make it easier and cheaper for anyone to buy. Desktop Internet catalogues will put purchasing in the hands of user. More and

more companies will set up private, supply orientated virtual networks through which they can access, develop and manage their suppliers and their suppliers' suppliers. The more of the network that becomes mapped, the more risk and behaviour can be predicted. The challenge for supply, or network managers is to control risk prevention, but to tune the network for optimum performance. By mapping supplier capacity across the whole of the supply chain, purchasing staff will be able to identify opportunities for process rationalisation and gain a better realisation of planning effectiveness. They can tune their networks to perform more effectively. It will be important for purchasing and supply management staff to recognise that they are co-ordinating activities and services, instead of buying goods.

SKILLS REQUIRED FROM THE VIEWS OF EMPLOYERS AND PRACTITIONERS

Per Appendix 12 and 13, it is interesting to discover that:

1. Our graduates, who are less experienced and greatly involved in routine purchase rank 'negotiating skills' as the number one skill whilst their bosses think 'purchasing knowledge and concepts' and 'analytical ability' are more essential. It is because as noted in the trend of supply chain, purchasing people will be involved in partnering arrangements. Although negotiations will not become any less important, the nature of them will change. Instead of heavy reliance on emotions and 'heated' debate, the focus will be one 'win-win' situation especially in the supply chain; the goals will be to establish winning relationships that result in lower total costs.
2. There is a great disparity in computer literacy as well, about 85% of employers requires require skills but only 54% of graduates share the same feelings. It is probably due to the demand of management information and the efficient operations from senior staff.
3. Bosses are more demanding than the subordinates since most of the scores given by industries are higher than those given by our graduates.
4. All the training areas are ranked far above '3' except 'Civic Education', which is scored as '2.94'. High scores of above '4' evidence the significance of English and supply concepts.

HOW AN ENHANCED VOCATIONAL EDUCATION IS TO BE DEVELOPED TO CATER FOR SUCH VAST DEVELOPMENT

The primary role of IVE in purchasing education and training is to provide students with a basic understanding of purchasing. Partnership with industries not only is a must to keep our purchasing training competitive but also facilitates the arrangement of industrial visits, talks and forums, attachment and research projects.

The shift of Hong Kong towards service based activities has increased the need for development of certain generic skills, which are fundamental to nearly all occupations, and are required in addition to more job specific skills. These include:

1. language capabilities, particularly in English and Putonghua,
2. IT skills, involving familiarity with the use of relevant computer software, and the implications of continuing development of hardware and telecommunications, and
3. development of what may be described as a service culture.

There is an external force to drive the change as well. Recognition by professional bodies is ranked highest in the expectations of purchasing courses because purchasing is not widely recognised as a 'profession' yet. Professional recognition not only upgrades the status of the course but also increases the employability of graduates (Appendix 14). Therefore, linkage with professional bodies is essential and those professional bodies should be extended to the ones with international status. It is unavoidable that the curriculum design is influenced by these bodies' examination syllabus.

Learning is no more limited in classrooms. Visits, industrial projects, talks and forums, attachment programmes are effective teaching methods too. Through those non-classroom activities, students will have the opportunities to learn project plans, questionnaire design, data collection and hypothesis testing to obtain insights in business situations. They are also encouraged to use computer applications for decision making, illustrating concepts and principles and presenting results of their study.

CONCLUSION

The skills required by the purchasers in the 2000 can be categorised into three areas:

1. enterprise (having a good understanding of the overall business)
2. interpersonal, and
3. technical.

That means that purchasing professionals must be essentially and interpersonally competent and have a good grasp of the total enterprise. It is the challenge for the trainers to develop education and training programmes that will allow purchasing professionals to acquire the appropriate knowledge and to develop the right skills for coping with the dynamics of the business world.

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APPENDICES

1	Source of Information	7
2	Distribution of Job Markets	7
3	Qualifications Required for Purchasing Jobs	8
4	Working Experience Required for Various Positions	8
5	Salary Range (HK\$/Month)	8
6	Length of Time for The First Job to be Offered After Graduation (for 1999 graduates)	9
7	Monthly salary of Full-time Graduates	9
8	Position Held (Official Title Held by Past Graduates from 1991-1998)	9
9	Occupations of Past Graduates (1991-1998)	9
10	Fourteen Cases of Recent Moves in Purchasing and Supply Functions	10
11	Barriers for Implementation of SCM	13
12	The Preferred Skills that IVE Students Should Attain	13
13	The Rating of Importance of Different Training Areas	14
14	Teaching Methods and Expectations of the Purchasing Courses	14

Appendix 1: Source of Information *

Newspaper	Weekday	Total no. of publications	Total no. of jobs	Duration
Career Times	Fri	17	24,637	1/10/99 – 28/1/00
SCMP	Wed & Sat	34	23,246	2/10/99 – 29/1/00
Job Market	Tue & Fri	33	28,419	1/20/99 – 28/1/00
Recruit	Mon & Fri	28	25,301	1/10/99 – 31/1/00
Ming Pao	Wed & Sat	34	6,482	2/10/99 – 29/1/00

* The data was collected by the students of IVE (ST) studying Diploma in Purchasing and Stores Supervision

Appendix 2: Distribution of Job Markets

Purchasing	19.6%
Administration	14.1%
I.T. & Engineering	23.3%
Accounting	9.2%
Marketing & Sales	20.9%
Production	4.6%
Others	8.3%
	100 %

Appendix 3: Qualifications Required for Purchasing Jobs

F.5 or above	35.1%
F.7	16.7%
Graduates of Technical Institutes	22.2%
Degree holders	8.7%
Others (Not specified)	17.3%

Appendix 4: Working Experience Required for Various Positions

Years of Experience	Job title	Percentage
1 - 3 years	Shipping clerk, Assistant Merchandiser, Purchasing Clerk	34.7%
4 - 6 years	Buyer, Merchandiser	38.1%
7 - 8 years	Senior Buyer, Senior Merchandiser, Purchasing Manager, Merchandising Manager	12.8%
9 - 10 years	Senior Purchasing Manager, Senior Merchandising Manager	12.3%

Appendix 5: Salary Range (HK\$/Month)**Purchasing**

Job title	1 - 2 yrs	3 - 5yrs	5yrs or above
Assistant Purchaser	6 - 10 K	7 - 13 K	9 - 15 K
Senior Purchaser	8 - 12 K	10 - 18 K	13 - 25 K
Purchasing Manager	/	15 - 20 K	18 - 35 K

Merchandising

	1 - 2 yrs	3 - 5 yrs	5 yrs or above
Assistant Merchandiser	7 - 9 K	8 - 13 K	10 - 15 K
Merchandiser	8 - 10 K	9 - 15 K	13 - 20 K
Senior Merchandiser	/	15 - 25 K	18 - 25 K
Assis. Merchandising Manager	/	15 - 25 K	20 - 25 K
Merchandising Manager	/	15 - 30 K	20 - 38 K

Warehousing

	1 - 2 yrs	3 - 5 yrs	5yrs or above
Inventory Clerk / Storekeeper	6 - 8 K	8 - 10 K	10 - 12 K
Stores Manager	/	10 - 18 K	15 - 20 K

Appendix 6: Length of Time for The First Job to be Offered After Graduation (for 1999**Graduates)**

One month	81%
Within 2 months	11%
Further Studies	4%
Unemployed	4%

Appendix 7: Monthly Salary of Full-time Graduates

1999 graduates	HK\$7,000 – 7,500
Median ('94 grad)	HK\$15,000
Lowest ('97 grad)	HK\$7,500
Highest ('92 grad)	HK\$30,000

Appendix 8: Position Held (Official Title Held by Past Graduates from 1991-1998)

Supplies/ Purchasing Clerk/ Merchandiser	11%
Supplies/ Purchasing Officer/ Supervisor	63%
Assistant Supplies/ Purchasing/ Procurement Manager	15%
Supplies/ Purchasing/ Procurement Manager	11%

Appendix 9: Occupations of Past Graduates (1991 – 1998)

Purchasing	70%
General Administration	14%
Stores / Materials planning & Control	7%
Sales and Marketing	5%
Others (Students, Catering)	4%

Appendix 10: Fourteen Cases of Recent Moves in Purchasing and Supply Functions

Industry	Companies	Contents
1. Retailing	GlobalNetXchange between: Sears (U.S.) Carrefour (Europe) Oracle (largest provider of software for e-business)	- First global B2B online exchange serving the retail industry which will significantly reduce their purchasing expenses and greatly enhance supply chain efficiencies with their trading partners - Initially focuses on \$80 billion supply chain purchases from 50,000 suppliers, partners and distributors - Serves 11,290 stores in USA, Latin America and Europe
2. Retailing	Partnership between: Kingfisher (UK) Marks & Spencer (UK) Tesco (UK) Albertson's (US) CVS (US) K-Mart (US) Safeway Inc. (US) Target (US) Auchan (France) Casino (France) Royal Ahold (The Netherlands)	- Handles 100,000 suppliers, partners and distributors - Serves over 300,000 stores of combined sales of over Euro 300 billion - Investment amounts to Euro 100 billion in the first few years

Industry	Companies	Contents
3. Retailing (Convenience Stores)	RetailersMarketXchange between: Chevron (US) McLane(US- subsidiary of Wal-Mart) and Oracle	- Serves US\$200 billion convenience store industry
4. Aerospace and defence	JV between: Boeing Lockheed Martin BAE SYSTEMS and Raytheon	- Based on the Commerce One MarketSite Portal Solution, powered by Microsoft - Global sales > US\$400 billion - Serves 37,000 suppliers, hundreds of airlines and national government - Total procurement outlay >US\$71 billion
5. Aerospace	Airbus Industrie's Material Support Internet	- As of 4 April 2000, 120 airlines that regularly access with the many other services provided on this site could also use e-commerce to order spare parts in real time
6. Aerospace	GE Aircraft Engines	- Launches several web sites that will connect commercial airlines to suppliers and customers over the Internet - Allows users to order and search for parts, check the status and maintenance of their engine parts, view detailed pictures of their parts while they are in repair, receive up-to-the-minute service bulletins
7. Thermo- plastics	JV between: DuPont Dow Chemical BASF Bayer Celanese unit Ticona	- Serves US\$50 billion market for plastic injections moulders - Initial investment of US\$50 million
8. Automobile	JV for on-line car-parts exchange between: General Motors Ford Daimlerchrysler Oracle	- Combined purchase > US\$160 billion
9. Government	Strategic alliance between: American Management Systems Inc and Freemarkets Inc.	- E-empower public purchasing

Industry	Companies	Contents
10. All	Strategic alliance between: Cable & Wireless HKT and Oracle	- Launches B2B electronic marketplace across a broad range of industries and their buying organizations and suppliers in Greater China - Invests >HK\$400 million over the next three years
11. Logistics and transportation	Global Transport eXchange between: Portsnportal.Com, the e-commerce group of Hutchison Port Holdings and Baltrans Holding Ltd.	- Serves >2,300 shippers - Using Arena Technology - E-commerce marketplace for buyers and sellers of logistics and transportation to meet and transact
12. Government	Government Supplies Department of Hong Kong SAR	- Started Electronic Tendering System (ETS) on 7 April - Annual subscription fee HK\$800 or paying a charge of HK\$20 each time - Contracted out ETS to Computer & Technologies International Limited - Number of suppliers will increase from 15,000 to 16,000
13. Government	Office of Government Commerce (OGC) of UK	- Came into full operation from 1 April 2000 - Provide a central resource of procurement skills for departments and set strategic framework within which departments operate - Target at saving 1 billion pound sterling by the start of 2002 - 90% of all high-volume, low-value routine procurement to be carried out electronically by 2001 - 50 staff in London HQ, 75% professionally qualified by April 2000
14. Government	Government Procurement of China	- National Tendering Law was effective from 1 Jan 2000 - Shanghai appointed 403 procurement specialists as consultants to work out and advise governmental purchases in April 2000 - Formulate a policy and long-term plan for the purchase in 2000 - Target to open governmental purchase to APEC in 2020

Appendix 11: Barriers for Implementation of SCM

No information sharing	67%
Lack of vision	58%
Lack of skills	57%
Lack of training	57%
Lack of technology	43%

Appendix 12: The Preferred Skills that IVE Students Should Attain

Skills	Graduates	Industries
Negotiation Skills	89.1%	84.9%
Purchasing Knowledge and Concepts	78.3%	93.9%
Analytical Ability	73.9%	90.9%
Interpersonal Skills	65.2%	78.8%
Computer Literacy	54.4%	84.9%
Language Proficiency	54.4%	66.7%
Others	10.9%	18.2%

Appendix 13: The Rating of Importance of Different Training Areas

5=Very Important and 1=Least Important

Purchasing and Supply	4.64
Materials Planning and Management	4.32
Language and Communications (English)	4.03
Information Technology Applications (EDI, MRPII, ERP etc)	3.90
Legal Studies	3.83
Industrial & Commodity Knowledge	3.57
Other management studies (e.g. Marketing, Finance etc.)	3.57
Chinese Language and Communications (Putonghua)	3.48
Civic Education	2.94

5=Most Adequate and 1=Least Adequate

1. Arrangement of the external recognition by purchasing professional bodies (e.g. The Institute of Purchasing and Supply of Hong Kong and The Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply, CIPS UK)	3.93
2. Method of instruction: lectures, role plays, discussions and case studies	3.90
3. Exploring of experience by hiring expertise with subject related experience	3.90
4. In-depth specialised subjects in Purchasing and Supply (e.g. Legal Framework, Purchasing Strategy etc.)	3.90
5. Industrial projects by students	3.80
6. Talks/ Forums by practitioners	3.77
7. Exploring of experience by local industrial visits	3.76
8. Design for external professional examinations	3.67
9. Attachment programme in industry	3.43
10. Exploring of experience by overseas industrial visits to China, Taiwan and other Asian countries	3.34

FROM 20TH CENTURY EDUCATION AND TRAINING TO 21ST CENTURY SKILLS ENHANCEMENT

Archibald M. Fleming

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Index: Lifelong Learning, Global Learning, Corporate Universities

Abstract: This paper examines the impact of ICT on the evolution of the learning process, in particular, the way that 'passive' education has adapted to become more 'active' participative learning. The growth of corporate learning accelerated by developments in ICT is making a major contribution to this evolutionary process and is posing various problems for traditional educational institutions.

INTRODUCTION

When future historians come to give an account of the beginning of the 21st Century, they may well describe it as the 'learning revolution', or the 'information age', the time when rapid technological development resulted in fundamental changes in work, leisure and lifestyle. Throughout the world, countries are now recognising the urgent need for positive action to enhance the skills and competences of their workforces, a movement that requires a radical reform of education and training systems. Employers are demanding higher levels of skills amongst employees as the 'job for life' disappears, with career patterns becoming more unpredictable and many individuals increasingly taking greater responsibility for their own personal development. It has become clear that in order to cope with this new age of uncertainty, the expansion of education and training along traditional lines would be not only too slow, but also too cumbersome and costly. Traditional methods of teaching and learning are unlikely to be adequate for the skills which will be necessary for the workforce of the future. Already, the business community has made it clear that any expansion of education and training does not mean more of the same. Educators have been challenged to think again about the meaning of a good general education - the skills and abilities of the best industrialists, barristers, journalists and civil servants. At the heart of the debate is the idea that a producer-led system should change to become (at least in part) user-led. Student demand and employment needs should take their place beside academic judgements to determine both the content and standards of courses.

A LEARNING REVOLUTION

The emerging importance of the value of learning, together with developments in technology, are resulting in a new approach comprising learning, not just from pre-packaged courses delivered in a traditional format, but also of combinations of skills, specified by individual learners and at the times and places convenient to them. Many companies, universities and colleges are now taking steps to implement this new approach through innovative arrangements for learning in the workplace, at home and in community-based locations. Such efforts are strongly supported by the availability of new technologies such as electronic networks and multi-media programmes which now make it possible to introduce improvements in:

- fitness for the purposes and needs of the learner
- accessibility of learning opportunities in terms of time, place and pace
- quality of learning materials and interaction with tutors
- cost effectiveness of provision

Economic and technological change therefore, sets four challenges for those of us involved in lifelong learning:

- creating a greater demand for learning
- widening participation in learning
- enhancing the skills of the workforce
- modernising the supply of learning

FROM EDUCATION AND TRAINING TO LEARNING

Traditional approaches to education and training are passive in nature, involving the teacher who is perceived to be the source of knowledge, conveying facts and figures to the learner with progress assessed by examinations or tests. This codified or 'know what' approach to learning, whereby progress is assessed by the ability to recall facts, has been a feature of formal education systems for the last two centuries. An additional feature of the traditional approach has been that one must or should choose between an academic or vocational course of study after the end of compulsory schooling. An academic education tended to mean study that is theoretical. By contrast, vocational education has meant learning that is practical, work related, specific or narrow, implying the achievement of specific skills or knowledge. It goes without saying that academic education has traditionally carried a higher perceived value than vocational, with the result that the contrast between academic and vocational is imprecise and value laden. Today, the distinction is no longer useful as it becomes clear that the characteristics of work based training and academic education are converging.

Specific knowledge quickly becomes obsolete as the context in which it is applied changes. For this reason, we are seeing a shift in emphasis to continuing education (or lifelong learning) as highly skilled employees and professionals seek to cope not only with technological advance, but also with changes in their regulatory framework.

The new world of education and training is complex and fast moving, including amongst its innovations an expansion of commercialised learning. Such developments incorporate the growth of corporate education, 'for profit' training and 'on-line' delivery, accompanied by a significant increase in the demand for higher education and the introduction of market mechanisms to the public sector. Whilst Corporate Universities exist predominantly in the USA (there were 1,600 in 1999), the numbers in Europe are currently small although it is predicted they are likely to grow in the next few years. The focus of activities in many Corporate Universities tends to be narrow, skill-focussed and lacking in links to academic research. Learning tends to take place in bite-sized chunks, providing rapid and regular updating of skills and competences. In general, Corporate Universities place increasing emphasis on the use of technology to deliver training in formats that involve short and intensive study periods. According to the UK report 'Learning for the Twenty-First Century' (1997), Corporate Universities are associated with three broad categories of learning:

- task specific or job related (to improve the efficiency and productivity of the workforce)
- parallel and transferable skills (to create a more flexible workforce)

- personal development (to provide the knowledge and skills to enable individuals to make employment and career changes and to create opportunities for personal fulfilment)

The report argues that effective learning in a corporate environment will only take place where there is recognition of the contribution that each of these types of learning can make both to business success and individual development.

GLOBAL LEARNING

One of the most important consequences of the emergence of Corporate Universities is the development of what is now called 'global learning' to indicate developments which cross the traditional boundaries of colleges and universities. These boundaries are being gradually eroded by commercial learning enterprises in a variety of different ways:

- Physical:** the term 'extra-mural' was originally used to describe courses which took place beyond the institution's geographic area. Today, terms such as these are becoming increasingly meaningless as institutions like the UK Open University, with over 30,000 students taking courses overseas, are making the idea of a physical boundary meaningless. In Scotland, we have formed Scottish Knowledge, an internationally recognised distance education Company which has the backing of all 13 Scottish Universities, many Further Education Colleges and a number of leading commercial organisations. It exports university or college expertise in education and training and has recently signed a global e-university alliance with Shell International to give the Company's 96,000 employees across the world access to on-line education and training. Scottish Knowledge is currently working with a number of overseas institutions to establish Virtual Universities which have student enrolment targets over the next decade of more than 100,000 students. In May this year, Scottish Knowledge won a contract to set up the United Arab Emirates first Petroleum Education Training and Research Institute, to offer internet-based training courses across markets in the UAE, the Middle East, the Gulf and Asia. These modern mega institutions are not ivory towers, autonomous spaces isolated from the murky world of politics on the one hand and the rigours of the market on the other. Operating on a commercial basis, they are aware that the best method of financial success is to increase their share of the market by enrolling students from around the world regardless of geographical location.
- Type of student:** when I was an undergraduate, a student was someone aged 17 or 18 who had just left school with a batch of Certificates which carried the entitlement to embark on a university course. Today, this 'front-loaded' profile of the student population is giving way to a much wider age range with many Universities having the majority of students in the 25 - 35 age bracket. It is becoming clear therefore, that more and more people throughout the world are continuing their education after the compulsory phase as the need to maintain personal development and keep up with change at work remains a vital component of coping with modern lifestyles. At Strathclyde University we have a Senior Studies Institute to provide opportunities for people over 50 to continue their personal growth and intellectual development within a supportive educational environment. The Institute also conducts a number of inter-generational programmes designed to highlight the benefits which can accrue from the mixing of generations through summer schools and other mixed age educational programmes.

- c) **Syllabus:** syllabus borders are also changing as a high proportion of today's students select courses which are designed to prepare them for employment. The expansion of courses in business, information technology, leisure, tourism and other vocational areas, is a reflection of a changing emphasis in the move away from 'pure' academic disciplines to courses which are a preparation for future careers. Thus, colleges and some universities would be well advised to develop syllabuses which include the development of those practical skills of hand and mind which are considered essential to the well trained graduate. They may be the skills of the market place or the board room, they may be the skills of the call centre or the electronic workshop; they will certainly include the skills of exercising judgement and of communicating that judgement clearly and unambiguously. The higher education courses in the future are unlikely to be limited to subject based single honours courses which have been so much a feature of education, certainly in Britain for the last century. Instead, there should be academic pathways of considerable lateral and longitudinal diversity to match the wide range of talents of a diverse group of learners. The skills of writing and speaking clearly in public, once regarded as essential, need to be restored and replace the traditional emphasis on information gathering and the recall of facts.

CONCLUSIONS

As we are continually encouraged to become a learning society, to work in learning organisations and to participate in lifelong learning, it is becoming apparent that education throughout this century will not survive in its existing format. Universities are currently being driven by radical change as they bow to demands from the student body for new ways of teaching and learning. In future, universities and colleges will need to innovate, to diversify and collaborate to a much greater extent than has happened in the past if they are to survive. Mega Universities, as described by Sir John Daniel, the Vice Chancellor of the UK Open University, are institutions with as many as 100,000 students enrolled at any one time. This year we have seen the establishment of the US Open University, an American version based on identical principles to the British institution. Other nations are establishing similar Mega Universities, relying on distance learning to recruit large numbers of students scattered throughout the world. These Mega Universities are posing a threat to smaller institutions in much the same way as many local shops have suffered with the growth of supermarkets. This changing scene raises issues for Universities which, in the future, are less likely to continue to be places where a body of knowledge is made available to young school leavers and more likely to be providers of flexible learning opportunities for a more heterogeneous student population, seeking access to education and training from leaving school to retirement and beyond. Students who have previously been disadvantaged by work schedules or family commitments, or by remote geographical location, now recognise that opportunities exist for part-time flexible study, incorporating distance learning and internet materials which, in many cases, supersede the quality of the face-to-face tuition of traditional educational institutions.

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REGIONAL INTEGRATION OF TVET SYSTEMS AMONG SMALL ISLAND STATES: CARIBBEAN INITIATIVES

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Index: Regional integration, vocational qualifications, developing countries, trends

Abstract: States in the Caribbean Community (Caricom) are exploring regional integration of TVET as a means of improving the quality of training to enable improved worker performance and labour market mobility of workers in the region. This involves reaching a consensus on (1) the basis for design of training programmes, e.g. the approach to standards, use of competency-based approaches, etc., and (2) the framework for recognition and certification of trainees/workers that facilitates upward mobility and lifelong learning. Current efforts to achieve regional integration are discussed with issues and problems highlighted for discussion.

INTRODUCTION

Globalisation has illuminated the need for countries to improve their VET systems as one ingredient for competitive, high performance firms and more competitive economies. Workers need to be trained to employer-defined standards, with more emphasis on flexibility, on working in teams and on problem analysis and problem solving. VET systems have responded with industry-led standards, new curricula that emphasize the new skill profiles, and recognition systems that certify competencies and articulate movement among levels and kinds of education and training experiences.

The Need for Integration

The members of the Caribbean Community (Caricom) adopted a common strategy in 1990 to improve Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) in all the member states along common lines. The more advanced states, Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, and Barbados are now integrating their recognition systems within a common framework and the other members are being invited to participate in this regional recognition framework. In addition to recognition of competence there is a need for greater integration of TVET provisions to avoid duplication of effort and achieve economies of scale in areas like instructor training and production of training materials.

Along with the changes required by globalisation, within the Caribbean region the need for freer movement of labour among neighbouring and similar states collectively known as Caricom has emerged as a means to improve the flexibility of the labour market and widen job opportunities for Caricom nationals. Member countries have signed agreements allowing freer movement of skilled labour under new provisions for a Single Market and Economy (SM&E), but these agreements require a shared framework for recognition of occupations. At present, graduates of the regional university, the University of the West Indies, journalists, recognised professionals, professional athletes and entertainers enjoy such freedom of movement. These initiatives in TVET have potential to allow much greater scope for movement of skilled labour across boundaries.

Possibilities for Integration

The occupational competence recognition systems in various stages of development in Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago and Barbados are similar with each using the British and especially the Scottish approach to recognition in the form of National Vocational Qualifications. In the nine Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) countries there is interest in reforming TVET along lines consistent with the current regional integration. Furthermore, the 1990s have seen the emergence of National Training Agencies or National TVET Councils in five Caribbean countries (Jamaica, Trinidad & Tobago, Barbados, St. Lucia, and Antigua, with the last two in formative stages). All the countries express a desire for a standards-driven, competency-based approach already underway in three countries. The award of National Vocational Qualification in three countries can be converted into a Caribbean Vocational Qualification given sufficient co-operation by these countries. OECS countries would participate under an umbrella established jointly by the OECS Secretariat and the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC).

The Framework for Regional Integration

The framework for regional integration includes a consensus as to (1) a Technical Operating Model, (2) agreement about the definition of Levels of Employment, and (3) agreement as to an overall Certification or Recognition Framework. The three charts attached as Appendices show the proposed framework now under consideration by the various countries. The framework includes a common approach to:

- Developing Occupational Standards based on input from employers;
- Developing Curricula: instructional design, curriculum guides, training materials, assessment methodologies;
- Defining Occupational Levels and corresponding recognition levels using a five level framework;
- Defining a Certification Framework that relates these levels to formal education and, loosely, to timeframes for work experience;
- Execution of a Memorandum of Understanding, and
- Establishment of a Caribbean Association of National Training Agencies (CANTA).

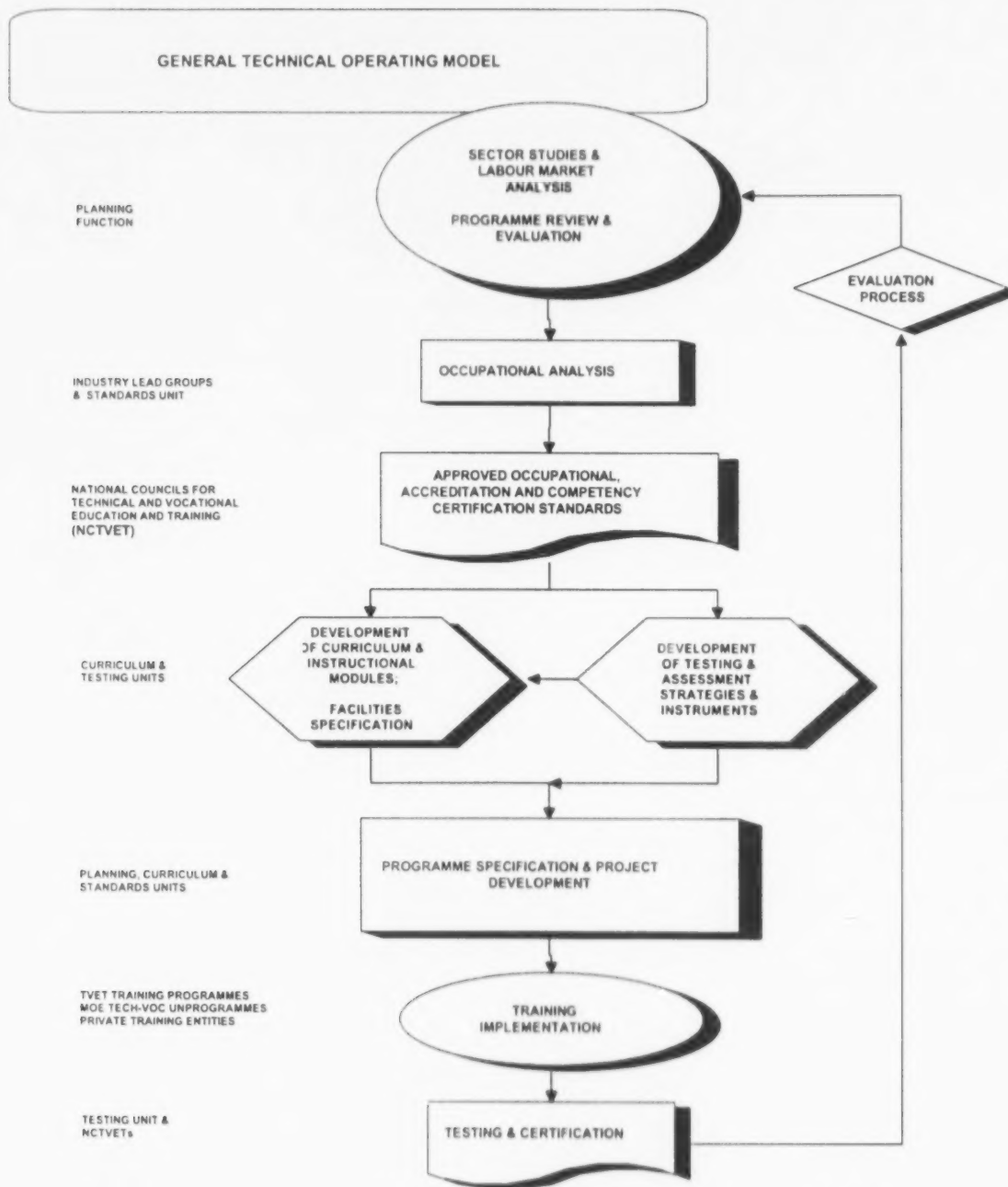
Issues and Problems in Regional Integration

The discussion of various issues and problems pertinent to the particular region can be generalised to other systems seeking to integrate recognition of qualifications. The main issues include:

- The dilemma of integrating Technical Education in secondary education into the vocational framework: there are barriers to articulation with a vocational training system with multiple and advanced levels and work experience requirements. Technical Education articulates well with the tertiary level via CXC, an academic qualification that includes a number of technical subjects, but these subjects are not defined based on employer standards and they terminate as secondary education qualifications without connection to actual occupations in the workplace.
- The problems of articulation between advanced levels of vocational training and tertiary education, and especially professional education: VET participants are not now recognised by the tertiary system and their academic qualifications revert to secondary-level experiences despite additional academic attainment from VET.

- Appreciation for certification among employers: Caribbean employers orientation tends to be traditional and academic. The hiring preference for entry-level jobs is biased in favour of traditional high schools and CXC subject passes. The currency of vocational training is rising, but not in all sectors.
- National approval and adaptation of extra-national standards: each state needs to have its own apparatus to adopt or adapt extra-national material to its specific requirements; this is a function of the training agency or council in each territory. Whether the Industry Lead Groups will be replicated in each country remains an open question, likely determined by the importance of a particular area of employment to member states.
- Means to resolve conflicting or inadequate standards: each country finds itself continually updating and improving standards. If a standard is shared that is viewed as inadequate by the receiving country, the idea is that all countries may benefit from improvements undertaken.
- Openness to other English-speaking and CARICOM countries to participate in the regional integration: there is a range of interest and readiness among the smaller territories to participate, but resources and political will are not always in place. The dominance of the academic and professional model in the region is a constraint to real understanding and acceptance of the VET model.
- Information sharing, Internet and web site linkages: sharing of material is one of the most important features of the co-operation. Jamaica has launched a website that will eventually be a repository for sharing information and the envisioned CANTA will build upon this experience.
- Labour Market Information Systems: planning within the region is hampered by inadequate LMI systems. This problem will become more noticeable as freer movement of labour is facilitated by the new arrangements.
- Research and evaluation: an slowly increasing amount of co-operation is planned in this area, especially in terms of evaluation of newly implemented curricula.
- Bi-lateral and multi-lateral co-operation initiatives: "donor assistance" is a main driver of initiatives in the OECS and influences activities in Jamaica. The German (GTZ) projects in the OECS and Jamaica, in particular, facilitate integration. The Inter-American Development Bank also assists several regional initiatives with training, HRD or VET components. European Union funds are being channelled into the OECS countries and being targeted at VET to help these economies diversify away from dependence on bananas. These financing streams support strengthening of national VET mechanisms consistent with the integration framework and establishing a CANTA.
- Finally, the integration of the Caribbean Examinations Council (CXC) into the recognition scheme presents both a significant challenge as well as an opportunity. CXC is an academic qualification that includes technical and vocational subjects. The TVET subjects do not relate to the standards-driven, competency-based model promoted by the VET-oriented entities, nor do they involve work experience. CXC expresses interest in merging these two kinds of qualifications, but this remains a major challenge to effect these changes within schools. Furthermore, the eventual merging of all qualifications pertaining to education and training into a single, unified framework is a longer-term objective. Such a framework is needed to establish a seamless, articulated education and training system that ultimately combines academic and vocational and technical education for the region. The framework also needs to integrate institutional and work-based learning experiences.

Attachment 1



OCT 99

OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATION
PROPOSED GENERAL FRAMEWORK FOR OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS
Parties to Memorandum of Understanding among Caribbean TVET Agencies

LEVEL 1: ENTRY-LEVEL: SEMI-SKILLED, APPRENTICE, SUPERVISED WORKER

Recognises competence in a significant range of varied work activities performed in a variety of contexts. Work activities range from simple and routine to more complex and non-routine involving some individual responsibility and autonomy. Collaboration with others through work groups or teams may often be a requirement. Substantial supervision is required especially during the early months evolving into more autonomy with time.

LEVEL 2: SKILLED WORKER: TECHNICAL/SPECIALIZED INDEPENDENT WORKER (LICENCED, ETC)

Recognises competence in a broad range of varied work activities performed in a wide variety of contexts, most of which are complex and non-routine. Considerable responsibility, autonomy, control, teamwork and guidance of others are required.

LEVEL 3: TECHNICIAN, SUPERVISOR, TRAINER / INSTRUCTOR

Recognises competence in a broad range of complex, technical or professional work activities performed in a wide variety of contexts and with a substantial degree of personal responsibility and autonomy. Responsibility for the work of others and the allocation of resources are often a requirement. The individual is capable of self-directed application, exhibits problem solving, planning, designing, and supervisory capabilities. With additional specialised training can provide basic instruction.

LEVEL 4: MASTER CRAFTSMAN, MANAGERIAL, ENTREPRENEUR, INSTRUCTOR TRAINER

Recognises competence involving the application of a significant range of fundamental principles and complex techniques across a wide and unpredictable variety of contexts. Very substantial personal autonomy and often significant responsibility for the work of others and for the allocation of substantial resources, as well as personal accountabilities for analysis, diagnosis, design, planning, execution, and evaluation.

LEVEL 5: CHARTERED PROFESSIONAL AND/OR MANAGERIAL

Recognises the ability to exercise personal professional responsibility for the design, development, or improvement of a product, process, system or service. The award recognises technical and managerial competencies at the highest level and may be confined to those who have occupied positions of the highest professional responsibility and made outstanding contribution to the promotion and practice of their profession.

Attachment 3

OCCUPATIONAL LEVELS, EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES

PROPOSED GENERAL FRAMEWORK FOR CERTIFICATION

Parties to Memorandum of Understanding among Caribbean TVET Agencies, May 2000

OCCUPATIONAL LEVEL & CVQ LEVEL	EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENTS TO ENTER TRAINING ¹	DURATION OF TYPICAL PROGRAMME ²	JOB EXPERIENCE REQUIREMENT FOR CERTIFICATION	EDUCATIONAL REQUIREMENT FOR CERTIFICATION	TYPICAL TRAINING MODALITIES
Level 1 Semi-Skilled Worker, Apprentice, Entry Level Worker	Grade 9 equivalence ³ , or 2 CXC 'O' levels or equivalent for some skills	3 months to 1 year full-time	160 hours in an approved Work Experience site	Grade 9 equivalence	Institutionally- based or on-the-job or via <i>co-operative training</i> (firms and institutions)
Level 2 Skilled Worker	Grade 10 equivalence or 2 CXC 'O' levels	1 year part time while employed in skill	Usually 2 years	Grade 10 equivalence	Co-operative training
Level 3 Technician, Supervisory, Trainer/Instructor, Entrepreneur	Grade 11 equivalence or 2 CXC 'O' levels	1 year part time while employed in skill; Trainer requires specialised study.	Usually 3 years	Grade 11 equivalence (Preferably 3 'O' levels)	Co-operative training
Level 4 Master Craftsman, Instructor Trainer, Entrepreneur	3 CXC 'O' levels or equivalent	1 year part time while employed in skill; specialised training for Instructor Trainer	Usually 4 years	Not specified, but amount of training viewed as equivalent to a tertiary matriculation standard	Co-operative training
Level 5 Professional	Tertiary or university admissions requirements	1-2 years of full time study with articulation agreements in place	Usually 4 years or more ⁴	A university degree with professional courses	Set by professional bodies

¹ "Educational Requirements" refers to the level of *actual* academic achievement of candidates (rather than grades completed) as evidenced by achievement tests. These are viewed as minimum requirements to benefit from the training and to function effectively on the job.

² Programme duration is based on the standards and the competencies, as well as target group characteristics, and is, therefore, flexible.

³ "Equivalence" recognises various clearly understood educational qualifications as agreed by the parties based on national recognition schemes.

⁴ Various professional bodies may have different requirements.

THIRSTY HORSES AND PUBLIC WATERHOLES

Joyce Marie Turnbull

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Index: Employment and Training challenges, Indigenous communities Australia

Abstract: This paper deals with the challenges for vocational education and training administrators in the Northern Territory of Australia to respond to calls for action to address apparently opposing needs and forces. Issues considered include the incongruity of development theory and globalisation theory in the context of the Australian outback; the provision of effective training and employment programs to a largely traditional Indigenous population in remote Northern Territory communities; the clash between strategic planning in governmental and organisational contexts and the transmitted Indigenous world picture; the ambiguity of training for employment or the establishment of an enterprise culture in the remote Australian Indigenous context.

INTRODUCTION

Nature, they say, breaks the mould when she has created a masterpiece. This saying certainly holds true for the Northern Territory in Australia as there is probably no other political jurisdiction anywhere in the world with such a diversity and range of magnificent ecosystems and landforms. The Territory extends from the ancient and arid deserts of Central Australia through to the rich biodiverse tropical regions of Northern Australia. In the interval, lie some of the planet's grandest grazing properties and regions of mineral wealth.

The demography is even starker. The Northern Territory covers some 1,347,520 square kilometres and is home to approximately 190,000 proud Territorians. That's a population density of 1 person per 7 square kilometers, a statistic I would suspect that is hard to believe here in delightful Hong Kong.

Darwin is the Capital City wherein reside approximately 100,000 persons and about 1500km by road distant is Alice Springs with a population of another 26000 persons. Darwin is the seat of government and whilst the Northern Territory is not recognised as a state *per se*, it has self-government and sets its own policy agenda.

But I come not to sing the praises of one of nature's masterpieces but to leave you with some food for thought about some of the contradictions that surround public policy and the reality of providing VET opportunities for those who live outside the two main centres of the Northern Territory. In every sense, these are remote areas and are largely inhabited by Indigenous Australians. The remoteness is attended by some difficult educational opportunities and at times, restricted employment. In this paper, I want to reconcile these two encumbrances and public policy and also offer some notions of optimism for the future.

SETTING THE SCENE

Over 48,000 (27 % of the population) Northern Territory Indigenous Australians were counted in the 1996 Australian Census (Commonwealth of Australia 1997, p27). This count included both

mainland occupants and smaller pockets living in the islands in the Arafura Sea to the North. The overwhelming proportion of Territorian Indigenous Australians (greater than 42,000) lives in areas that redefine remoteness. Some have lifestyles that are relatively undisturbed by European occupation whilst those who live in Darwin coexist in a major international city with Australia's most multicultural society. More than 50 distinct Aboriginal languages are spoken throughout the Northern Territory and it has been reported that up to a third of Indigenous Australians in the Northern Territory do not speak English as their first language (Commonwealth of Australia, 2000, p.67).

Literacy and numeracy attainment of the young is largely poor. In *Learning Lessons* (Northern Territory Government, 1999, p.17) it was reported that the average Indigenous Australian leaves school with the reading age of a 6-7 year old. Only 31% of indigenous students across the Territory achieved National Year 3 Reading benchmarks in 1998 and only 2% from non-urban schools (ibid. p.35). The latter cohort can be described as non-English speaking but it is a pointer to the dimensions of the challenges facing vocational education and training (VET) planners in their quest to equip Indigenous Australians for the new millennium.

Demographers assure us that the proportion of Indigenous Australians is growing due to higher birth rates than for the rest of the population and so we are faced with some issues that will force us to think laterally in order to provide real equity in VET.

PUBLIC POLICY

It's been clear for over a decade now that government interest in dealing with disadvantaged groups is more than academic and some real progress has been made in the Territory in providing special assistance to indigenous students. So much so that approximately 39% of students are now Aboriginal, well above the comparative proportion of Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory's population. A powerful set of arrangements has been established by my agency to make sure that community advice about what training is needed, how it is to be delivered and when is the driving force in funding programs for regional and remote community people. These arrangements, and strong encouragement and liaison have all been contributors to the dramatic turnaround in providing training to a very disadvantaged group. It is of course a proud statistic that gives a pointer to the attainment of equity targets but as I will hint at later, equity targets sometimes obscure the real picture of need.

The national scene is characterised by a focus on skills for employment and the training needs of industry rather than the needs of individuals as was manifest in Australia for the previous two decades. This post-Karmel focus has been a crucial element in attaining competitiveness in the global context but it has left some pondering the need to return to some elements of self-expression and creativity in training that was evident when Karmelism (shall we call it) ruled. The Northern Territory context might add some weight to this, although I hasten to add that those from more industrialised areas might have an alternative point of view.

Contemporary analysis of the changing demands of the Twenty First-Century (UNESCO, 1999, p4) highlight globalisation, changing technology and concomitant rapid social change as key features. I noted from this report a call to a *shift to human development needs and empowerment for effective participation in the world of work. Its focus must be on the needs and potential of the individual in society.* I've highlighted this last paragraph because it succinctly summarises the apparent conflict between public policy and reality in the Northern Territory.

So, we have local, national and international imperatives for planning and most planners diligently work towards aligning their efforts to these political imperatives. Public policy is quite explicit and

most VET planners have firm guidelines to help them in their quest to align delivery to political imperatives. Let's now have a look at some of the issues that surround this public policy because there is some incongruity in development theory and globalisation in the context of the Australian outback.

A CURRENT THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR DEVELOPMENT

The past decade has seen an ebb and flow of political theories. At the moment it seems that economic rationalism is in the ascendancy in Australia so I will concentrate on some of the downstream effects resulting from this paradigm. I must add here that I'm not making any broad comment on any economic theory, just simply noting the results as applied to VET planning issues and highlighting any anomalies that occur from implementation of the theory in the practical world.

I think that it's fair to assert that economic rationalism likes (if not demands) to put value on outputs and outcomes. So, according to economic rationalism, any input into a system such as VET must have a measurable output. Not only should the output be measurable but it should also add value to the system that funded the activity. It's easy to see the rationale for this logic given the stated (government) objective of increasing competitiveness in a globalised economy. Bob Boughton (1999, 9) puts it nicely when he links human capital theory to economic rationalism. In this context, an economic rationale for the value of education is given, analysing it in terms of public and private investment. Human capital in this sense is the skill bank possessed by an individual and the arguments proposed in the theory seek to link national economic development with an increased national skill bank. I'm sure that in some sectors of development this model works very nicely.

Proponents of this theory argue that the potential contribution of an individual to society can be assessed by the domain of their skills and giving people skills to a job readiness is sufficient. The rest is up to them.

In contrast, other economic theories might have judged the value returned by training in terms of benefits to the individual or the society. Measurement of value is less concerned with extrinsic value (such as percent productivity gains) and more focussed on intrinsic value (such as contentedness, harmony and benefits to the community).

Human capital theory does not fit the Northern Territory VET context because it assumes a linear relationship between skills of an individual and their capacity to participate in the workforce. It disregards the unreasonableness of expecting a person who has close kinship to the land and close family ties to relocate to an unfamiliar, distant location and disconnect from tradition. It also ignores the reality of competition and of the proclivity of employers to choose a non-indigenous person in open competition for employment. Quite significantly for indigenous Territorians there is little attempt to establish equilibrium between the skills possessed and valued by indigenous people and those that might be prescribed as important to mainstream society. In fact, these tensions might be a major reason why all parties might have seen some well-funded programs as unsuccessful.

I need to remind delegates at this point that although the measurement of value might be precise in the national context, the measurement of skills is quite ambiguous. No account is made in a skill assessment of the level of traditional skills. These skills have helped indigenous people survive in one of the planet's inhospitable regions so they must have been quite significant. It is rather strange that care for the land should be devalued given the current emphasis in all sectors about encouraging environmental sustainability. It does seem that participation in training and preparation for job readiness are planning icons but this approach does at times tend to lend a somewhat paternalistic air to the effort, particularly when repeated calls for measuring outcomes are the norm.

Earlier on in this discussion I pointed to some recent evidence about poor literacy and numeracy levels, and they are. What is just as distressing to some of these communities is the loss of their traditional skills. There's quite an effort in some communities to turn around this decline but it does not quite conform (yet) to the national imperative of skilling for participation in employment. And so, some remote communities are coping a double hit in that their traditional skills are slowly being forgotten and their children are lacking basic skills to help them prosper in the modern society.

This also leads onto some thoughts about our successes in reaching so-called equity targets. Much of the effort is driven by national policy (Commonwealth of Australia, 1996). Once again though it has a rationalist argument as driver, relating Australia's future prosperity to improved economic performance and the involvement of all Australians. The same report (page 6) called for a shift in qualifications for Indigenous Australians so that 40% of participation were at Skilled, Trade and Para Professional levels by 2001.

We have been (mathematically) spectacularly successful in meeting participation targets but I do wonder if we should be re-thinking a strategy for our equity effort. If human capital theory is passe then what should take its place and how should we drive towards new targets? Indeed, what are the targets? Our legacy as a good manager must include stewardship. When we pass on the baton to our successors we must have ensured that our constituents are more able to cope with the future than when we received the baton.

Boughton (1998, p 6) argues that despite equity targets an improvement in traditional performance measures is unlikely to succeed. He makes the point that even if we could move our effort away from raising participation towards participation at skilled levels we would be still face the current problems. It is very difficult to overcome historical reasons of past education factors, the extreme underdevelopment of most aboriginal communities and the lack of sufficient funding (public or private) support for indigenous peoples' own development aspirations connected to the land and localities where they live.

Teasdale (1996) argues that a critical think in policy is needed leading to a fundamental shift from equity to Indigenous rights. These sort of decisions are the domain of the political domain but if this does evolve then we will see an increasing emphasis on Indigenous autonomy and self-determination in the management of VET programs.

AN ALTERNATIVE MODEL FOR DEVELOPMENT

Now that I've given the thumbs down to some current sacred cows then in all fairness I should propose an alternative development model for equipping Indigenous communities for their place in the modern community. Hopefully, if we can achieve some success in reducing societal inequalities then we might provide a little momentum in the journey towards overcoming the challenges that lie ahead.

Before I launch off into this I must make it plain that literacy and numeracy must remain the overriding imperative in schools. Current Northern Territory policy is very firm on this point. All Australians require these skills as a fundamental tenant of attaining and maintaining dignity in life. Similarly, I regard the acquisition of literacy and numeracy as a priority for funding by my agency where they have been missed at school. This will continue but I want us to think about the real development needs of remote communities assuming that literacy and numeracy requirements have been prosecuted. I would like us to put away for the moment the concept of participation targets and consider the needs of communities to survive in the 21st Century.

Here are the two dimensions of a new development model for your consideration.

Accessibility

We need to think through some of the issues surrounding accessibility to training and recognise that the concept of remoteness is largely artificial. In fact, many within "remote" indigenous communities would not regard themselves as remote at all but they have lived and worked with the land all their lives. This might give us some hints about their developmental needs and also of the ways that we might evaluate the effectiveness of our commitment.

The Human Rights Commission report (Commonwealth of Australia 2000, p.73) contends that accessibility has three dimensions and these are availability (free from discrimination in law and fact), physically accessible and economically accessible. Our developmental model might need to consider some of these issues but I'm confident that our current commitment and planning methodology have these under control. What's important though is that communities have access to programs that they see as important to the development of their community.

Community Self-Determination

There's little point about pursuing notions of full employment in remote areas when all the evidence that we have suggests that employment will contract but population will continue to grow. It might be more honest to acknowledge that whilst paid employment may not necessarily be the norm, people within a community can be fully occupied and increase in prosperity. The upsurge in ecotourism and cross-cultural tourism has to a large extent been influenced by indigenous participation. This in turn was assisted by communities that could draw on existing skills and add to their skill profile.

Community self-development might mean different things to different people and indeed I'm sure that the notion of development will be viewed differently by some indigenous folk than others. I guess that the point that I'm trying to make here is that we all have a sense of stewardship and long for our community to prosper so that our children have greater opportunities. It will be no different in an indigenous community.

It ought to be fairly easy for VET planners to come to terms with the notion of community development as they have considered regional development as their mandate for some time. Similarly, it should be easy for communities to consider themselves part of regional development as their development benefits the region at large. Scrutiny of regional Aboriginal development plans as compiled by regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Councils (ATSIC) show common development themes around health, housing and education. And these are of course some of the very elements that attract the attention of mainstream regional development planners.

Cultural and language immersion is a concept dear to the heart of many Indigenous Australians and part of the community self-development theme may assist in that cause. This is a much bigger issue than VET but I think that it needs to be acknowledged as an important driver in reform. The current development model offers some scope for incorporating cultural immersion themes, however, it will be argued by some that much more acknowledgment and effort should be forthcoming.

The issue of performance measurement in a new model is a little more esoteric but I have taken some comfort in reading some recent work (Commonwealth of Australia, 1997b, p.5). This work describes the principles of accessibility, flexibility, quality and responsiveness as worthy indicators of the suitability of effort. I agree.

AN ACHIEVEMENT

I've focussed much of the effort of this paper into an analysis of the reasons for a new approach and two important factors that might inform a new approach to planning leading to community

development. During this, I've rather flippantly disposed of equity targets as inappropriate and hinted that real progress might come as a result of a much broader perspective.

Our role is much more than planning though and I think that it's important that I complete this presentation by referring to a project that has been a powerful influence on my agency, NTETA. NTETA has focussed on implementing programs that reflect the set of best practice principles for VET delivery with remote communities as defined by Djama and VET (1998). This is a report of a research project involving Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education (then Batchelor College), the Northern Territory University and NTETA. Key components of this best practice are:

- ❖ VET delivery is culturally appropriate
- ❖ Partnerships are established between providers and Indigenous client enterprises
- ❖ Workplace learning is central
- ❖ Training responses are customised so that they are appropriate to indigenous training needs through flexible delivery based on workplace learning and networking between providers and indigenous enterprises
- ❖ Quality student support and learning management systems involve provider/client agreements, workplace learning, on-site and off-site trainers and tutors and interactive technologies

These principles are interconnected, and mutually reinforcing and mutually defining (Robinson, 1999)

CONCLUSIONS

As I ponder the future of our effort in assisting remote community development, I'm reminded of the proverb: "You can lead a horse to water but you can't make it drink". If the pool to drink from in VET is filled with an emphasis on skills for conventional employment and the training needs of industry using a very narrow definition of industry, then we should not be disappointed if many of the Indigenous clients of our system are reluctant to, or in fact, decline to drink the "water" as it does nothing for their thirst. I'm confident though that the responsiveness and resourcefulness of staff and the commitment of governments are sufficient to clear a pathway through which our Indigenous Australians can find dignity.

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